

# THE OLD TESTAMENT

JOB—MALACHI

WITH

APPENDIX

(ALTERNATIVE VERSIONS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT)

# THE OLD TESTAMENT

NEWLY TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN VULGATE  
BY MGR RONALD A. KNOX AT THE REQUEST OF  
THE CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER

FOR PRIVATE USE ONLY

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*Job - Machabees*



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# THE BOOK OF JOB

## CHAPTER I

THERE was a man dwelling in the land of Uz—now, Job was the name of him,—that was true and honest; ever he feared God, and kept far from wrong-doing. Seven sons he had, and three daughters; and for wealth, he had seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred she-asses, and servants a many; in all the East none was Job's rival. And this custom his sons had in feasting, each invited the rest in turn; at such times they would send for their three sisters to sit and delight beside them. And ever when their work of feasting was over, Job would send for them,<sup>1</sup> and have them rid of all defilement; next morning, it was his first care to offer burnt-sacrifice for each of them. Who knows, thought he, but they may have committed some fault, these children of mine? Who knows but they may have slighted God in their secret thoughts? Never would he let the day pass without burnt-sacrifice.

One day, when the heavenly powers stood waiting upon the Lord's presence, and among them, man's Sonny, the Lord asked him, where he had been? Brooming about the earth, said he, to and fro about the earth.

Why then, the Lord said, dost thou have a servant of mine called Job. Here is a true man, an honest man, none like him on earth: ever he fears his God, and keeps far from wrong-doing. Job fears his God, the Father answered, and loses nothing by it. Shattered his life by thy protection, dedicated his home, his property, thy blessing on all he undertakes; worldly goods that will go on increasing; he loses nothing. One little touch of thy hand, smiting all that wealth of his! Then see how he will rave and blaspheme thee. Be it so, the Lord answered; with all his possessions do what thou wilt, so thou leave himself unharmed. And with that, the Sonny left the Lord's presence, and withdrew.

And now it was the turn of Job's children to sit over their feasting and their wine at the house of the eldest brother. That day, a messenger brought Job news of his sons and asses. The oxen were a ploughing, said he, and the asses grazing near them, when on a sudden a band of Sabotees swept down on them, and carried all away. As for thy men, the Sabotees put them to the sword, and none lives to tell the tale but I. Even as he spoke, another messenger came in with news of the sheep, how God's lightning had fallen, devouring sheep and shepherds, so that none was left to tell the tale but he. And upon the heels of that, in came a third to say

<sup>1</sup> Or possibly, 'Job would send (a priest) to them.'

that robbers from Chaldean, in three several bands, had closed in upon the camels and driven them away, killing the men who tended them, so that none was left to tell the tale but he. And before this one had finished his story, a fourth messenger came in. I come, said he, from thy eldest son's house, where but now thy sons and daughters sat at their feasting and their wine. All on a sudden, came a tempestuous wind from across the desert, and burst so on every corner of the house that it fell in, crushing thy children to death amid the ruins of thy house (Gen. 18: 16-17) but I.

Then rose up Job, and rent his garments about him; and he shaved his head bare, and fell down to earth to do reverence. Naked I came, said he, when I left my mother's womb, and whence I came, thither I must go. The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away; nothing is here befallen, but what was the Lord's will; blessed be the name of the Lord.<sup>1</sup> In all this, Job guarded his lips well, nor challenged with humanly God's wisdom.<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER 2

ONCE again the heavenly powers came to wait upon the Lord's presence; and there, waiting with the rest of them, was the Enemy of man. And of his words he still said the same; he had been recurring about the earth, to and fro about the earth. Why then, the Lord said, thou hast seen for thyself that this servant of mine, Job, has put his life on earth; a man so true and honest, ever fearing his God, and keeping far from wrong-doing. And will he mislead his innocence?<sup>3</sup> Shame it is that thou wouldst set us on to do him a mischief, and all to no purpose. Nay, answered the Enemy, this man suffer before thine eyes.<sup>4</sup> Nothing a man owns, but he will part with it to keep his skin whole. Then heard of this, let it fall on him of his, flesh of his, see if he does not curse and blaspheme thee. And thereupon said the Lord to man's Enemy, Have what power over him thou wilt, so his life be kept safe in him. And with that, the Enemy left the Lord's presence, and withdrew.

And straight he smote Job; smote him with the foul scab from head to

<sup>1</sup> The words "Nothing is here befallen, but what was the Lord's will" are found in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, in the Latin, "not said anything foolish against God." The sense of the Hebrew text seems to be, "not charged God with malicious proceedings."

<sup>3</sup> This may mean that he continued to show correct behaviour (cf. 1:16), but more probably that he would not admit he had done anything to deserve his sufferings (cf. 17:1, where the same words are used, and the argument of the book generally).

<sup>4</sup> Literally, "saw on behalf of him." The rendering given assumes that a proverb, couched in elliptical language, is best interpreted by inference of the sense.

- 10 long, as that he was fain to sit him down on the dung-hill, and scratch  
 11 himself with a shod where he itched. Little comfort his own wife gave  
 him; When, she said, will priding thyself on thy innocence? Better thou  
 12 shouldest reverence God, and have done with living. Spoken like a foolish  
 wife, Job answered. What, should we accept the good because God sends  
 us, and not the ill? So well, even now, did Job guard his lips.  
 13 News of the calamity that had befallen him reached three of his friends,  
 Eliphaz the Themanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Sophar the Naamathite.  
 From their far houses all, by agreement made, came to visit him, and give  
 14 him comfort. Scarcely, upon a distant view, could they recognise him;  
 loath they cried out, and wore they wept, tore their garments about them  
 15 and heaped the dust high on their heads. And for seven days and seven  
 nights they sat there on the ground beside him, and no word spoken;  
 here, they saw plainly, was everlasting grief.

## CHAPTER 3

- 1 **A**T last, Job himself broke into unreason, and fell to cursing the day  
 2 on which he was born. And this was his phrase: Blessed out for  
 ever be the day of my birth; that night, too, which gave word that a human  
 3 life had been conceived in the womb! Plunged be that day in darkness;  
 may God on high forget it, and grant it never shine of sun, shades, like  
 the shades of death, claim it for their own, deep gloom be heavy on it, and  
 4 wrap it all in desolation. Shrouded be that night in a black storm, neither  
 5 mark nor reckoning let it have in the moon's calendar; a night doomed  
 6 to exile, a night that never wakes the sound of praise. Whence that can  
 quench the sun, and rouse old Chaos from his lair, on that night lay  
 7 your ban; blot him in sunlight, let it smite the coming of dawn; the night  
 that should have closed the doors of the womb against me, that thou  
 8 open for ever to nights of woe!  
 9 Had but the womb born the tomb of me, had I died at birth, had no  
 10 lap ever cherished me, no breast suckled me, all would be met now,  
 11 all would be silence. Deeply I would take my repose, with the old kings  
 12 and senators, that once rendered eides for their wives,<sup>1</sup> the chieftains that  
 13 had such wealth of gold, houses full of slaves; with babe still-born and  
 14 false women, hidden away in the marble grave. There the unquietness of  
 15 the wicked is stilled, and the weary are at rest; unscathed the thrall  
 16 sleeps, his tyrant's bidding cannot reach him now; master and slave are  
 there, and the slave manumitted.

<sup>1</sup> "Rendered eides"; this is sometimes rendered, "built mansions;" but the meaning should probably be determined by passages like Is. 58.12.

Why should they see the light, that grows to use it; why should they be  
 live, that must live in bitterness of soul? Why should they long for a  
 death, like transients, a grave the place they crave? Such men as  
 am I, that must stand blighted in a mark of God's making! Ever as I sit  
 down to meet the night come, grief flows over me uncontrolled. Must I  
 have nothing left to haunt me? Must each intimacy be felt as soon as  
 faded? And will I kept my eyes closed, will pretend and pretend I, till my  
 angry mood overcome me at last?<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER 4

THEREUPON Elihu the Themanite made answer: Speak ye, ye  
 may be then will take our words amiss, yet speech will out. Well  
 thou knowest how to teach others, strengthen the drooping hands, give  
 courage to the weary, support to lagging knees, by counsel of thine. Now  
 the blow has fallen on thyself, and thy strength is gone; the nearest neigh-  
 bourhood of misfortune strikes thee. No more we hear now of that fear  
 of God, that life perfectly lived, which once gave thee confidence, gave  
 thee strength to stand! And, more enough, ruin never fell yet on the  
 innocent; never yet was an upright and lost to memory.<sup>2</sup> The man that  
 waits in wrong-doing, that now a drop of mischief they themselves reap;  
 reap it last, there I have seen undone, one breath, one blast of the divine  
 anger whirled them quite, and they are gone.

How lies and good horses, the flange of the lion-cubs will yet be in  
 shamed. For lack of prey, the tiger goes his way at last, the young lions  
 wander wild.<sup>3</sup>

Lions; here is a secret that was made known to me; it was but the  
 breath of a whisper overheard. It was the hour when eight violent howl  
 dispart, as men lie chained by sleep, five took hold of me, a fit of trans-  
 haling that chilled my whole frame, and made every hair bristle. All at  
 once a spirit came beside me; so fast I knew, yet I could see the form of  
 it, and catch its voice, light as a rustling breeze. Can man have sight on  
 it?

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text is radically misinterpreted in meaning. 'I have no rest, no quiet, no ease, nothing but turmoil in my life.'

<sup>2</sup> The expression here may be understood in either of two ways; it may be, 'You, Job, are innocent, therefore you cannot be wholly condemned to misfortune'; or it may be, 'You, Job, are condemned to misfortune, therefore you cannot be wholly innocent.' Perhaps both lines of thought were in the speaker's mind.

<sup>3</sup> These two sentences are evidently proverbial, and it is difficult to determine their reference here with certainty. 'Lioness' and 'tiger' in the Latin version should be 'lion' according to the Hebrew text; two different words are here used to describe the same animal.

his side, the voice asked, when he is matched with God? Can a mortal  
 compare their blasphemy in his Creator's presence? Nay, in his own refuge  
 God finds loyalty waiting; angels may err. What, then, of Man, earth-  
 bound in his house of clay, worn away by the moth of time? What of Man,  
 cut down between man and eve, doomed to perish unregarded, even  
 the struggler marching on at last? Will he not die before he learns wisdom?

## CHAPTER 3

WHO will listen to thy plaint against God? Will thou run to one of  
 his angels for redress? This ignorance of thine is a great weakness  
 of Job; in their simplicity of heart, they rejoice at the injury, to their  
 pain. Never yet did I see a fool secure in his possessions but I prophesied  
 a disaster, there and then, for his fair prospects. And will would I see his  
 children bereft of hope, ground down by false judgment, and none to  
 bring redress; his harvest a prey for hungry neighbours, himself for the  
 second sabbot, his wealth drunk up by thirty months.<sup>1</sup>

Never was ill without a cause; never did mischief spring up self-sewn.  
 Man's heart is the mischief, as sure as birds will fly.<sup>2</sup>

Where counsel for me; to the Lord himself my plaint shall be made,  
 of God himself I will seek audience. His magnificence counsels none may  
 fathom, none reckon up his marvelous deeds. His to grant the parched  
 mud rids, watering the countryside, his to make men of low stature, to  
 comfort the mourner with new hope. Through him the crafty schemer  
 is bolder of his sin, cunning overreaches himself, and knavish plots are  
 thwarted to the winds; wise fools, that blink in daylight, and grasp their  
 way blindly at full noon.

So, from their slander and their violence, he rescues the poor and the  
 unbelittled; now, misery, take heart, now, malice, hide thy face  
 ashamed!

Happy the man, whom God chastens for his fault! The correction  
 he sends thee never, on thy life, refuse. Wounds be, it is but to heal;  
 in the same hand, which wounds, shall medicine thee. So in six parts thou

<sup>1</sup> 'Then the struggler marching on at last', or perhaps, according to the Hebrew text, 'their marching dancing thence at last.' Some think we should read, by a very slight alteration in the text, 'when their tax-pag is taken over,' a metaphorical description of Man's impotence.

<sup>2</sup> The text and interpretation of this verse are uncertain.

<sup>3</sup> 'Mischief'; literally, in the Latin version, 'trouble,' but the context seems to show that the right meaning of the Hebrew word is to be preferred. The trouble-man undergoes do not spring up haphazardly; they are the fruit of his previous sin. 'As sure as birds will fly,' some interpret the Hebrew text as meaning 'as sure as sparks will fly upwards.'

shall go unharmed, and find yet one deliverance more; hunger shall not invade thee, sword wound thee, slander shall thee not, bewick reach thee; as engine and death thou shalt defy. And besides all this, reviving hearts as shall not desert thee, friendly will for thee are the desert rocks, and the wild things are in league with thee; secure thou shalt keep thy tent, or visit thy fair fields, and nought shall go amiss. Be sure that thy posterity will increase like the green grass thy root shall flourish; and when go to to the grave thou shalt, it shall be with strength undiminished, like ripe corn at harvest-house. Have our thoughts tested and found true, well for us that if thou wilt feed them, and ponder them in thy heart.

## CHAPTER 6

**B**UT Job answered: Oh that I had such a pair of scales as might weigh provocation of mine against the life I suffer! The wind on the shore of noon could not match the burden of these, and do you wonder that my utterance is all reproach? Deep the Lord's arrows sinkle in me, drinking my life; all his arrows are arrayed against me. Drays the wild sea, he casts he lacks pasture; leave the ox, he stands before an empty crib. Would you have me selfish food seasoned, list my lips over the taste that brings death? The food I had no stomach for, in my hand strains out I must.<sup>1</sup>

Might it be granted, this is the boon I long for, this the request I would make of God, that he would finish what he has begun, crush me altogether, strike a full blow and make an end of me! Consolation enough, if he will but remove me so my death is no reproach, then, against his will. In what strength should I hold out? In what hope repose? Have I or the redundancy of blood? Is my flesh brass? Help is myself is none; human aid keeps its distance from me now. Nay, who denies the Lord's greatness more surely than I find who refuses compassion to a friend? See how the men that are my brothers have failed me, like as the mountain brooks that run headlong down their ravines; first chartered with foot, then piled high with snow, then, when the snow melts, gone, washed away at the first touch of the hand. This way and that their winding channels were, but all to no purpose, all are lost to dam.<sup>2</sup> Nay, deities assume, or

<sup>1</sup> 'Provocation of mine' is it not certain whether this means 'wrong-doing by which I have provoked God to punish me,' or 'the state of provocation which I feel'?

<sup>2</sup> In verses 4 and 5, the sense of the original is very doubtful.

<sup>3</sup> The Latin version here, taken by itself, yields no valuable sense. The rendering given above interprets it in the light of the Hebrew text, from which it differs completely.

10 *Behold you of the wayfarers from Thenna, the thirsty pilgrims of  
Sabel. Some hope I had in my friends, but all is disappointment; with  
eyes that will not meet mine, they come to visit me.*<sup>1</sup>

11 *Alas, you have come, but finding me so sadly unstrung you drew my  
company. In my little couch I asked; I never bade you diminish your  
own wealth by bringing gifts to me, never begged your aid to rid me of  
a sore enemy that was too strong for me. Come, be my instructors; I will*

*hear you out in silence; tell me what is the fault I have committed, all  
unknowning? If I have the claims of truth with such as you; not one of you  
can show me in the wrong, yet for very love of reproof you must be  
reproving still, all your words wafted on the air. Is it well done, to make  
a party of the defences, to conspire against the good name of your  
friend? Bewildered me, then, at your pleasure; try if close scrutiny can  
prove me false, only let there be no consciousness in your proceedings;  
in all honesty bring your complaint. You will not lessen pain on any  
word of mine; neither witness nor sever these lips shall frame.*<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER 7

1 *WHAT is man's life on earth but a campaigning? Like a hired drudge,  
he passes his days away: not ever was slave so weary, longing for  
the shade, or drudge so weary, waiting to earn his life, as I have been,  
counting these months of misfortune, these nights that never brought  
a rest. Lie I down to sleep, I weary to be up with the day; comes the day,  
I weary for the evening, confident until dark. Overgrown my flesh  
with worms, matted with dirt, my skin dried up and shrivelled. Foul  
as the weaver's thread my years runish away, spent without hope.*

7 *Behold then, Lord, it is but a breath, this life of mine, and I shall look  
on this fair world but once, when that is done, men will see me no more,  
and then as nothing. Like a cloud belated in passing, man goes to his  
grave never to return; never again the home-coming, never shall tidings  
of him reach the houses he knew. And should I utter no word? Nay, the  
crushed spirit will find a voice, the embittered heart will not keep its own  
counsel. Am I a raging sea, a revelling measure, that thou guardest me as  
a deer? When I would find rest on my pillow, take refuge in right  
thoughts, what dreams then render to dream me, what signs of terror  
to rattle me!*

11 *The rope for me! Death only will constrain this frame. To despair I*

<sup>1</sup> The sense of the Hebrew text is that the travellers (not the friends) come hopefully looking for the streams, and are disappointed.

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text of verses 11-20 is largely different, and its interpretation largely doubtful.



yield myself, I will live on no more; leave the hold of man, this life of mine is but the shadow of a life. Why is it that thou wilt make so noble a thing of man, wilt pay so much heed to him? Never a day dawns but a thou wilt surprise him at his post, never a moment when there art not making proof of him. Nay, give on me no more; leave me, though it were a but for a breathing-space, to myself! If stoned I have, dost thou art not of mine claim thy divine regard? Must my path always cross thine, my life always be a burden to thee? Would it were that much to forget him as of mine, pass over him of mine, where I, to none, shall be lying in the dirt, sleeping at my post, as thou makest thy rounds at dawn!

## CHAPTER 8

THEY answered Balaam the Subler: What wilt at thy old complaining; 1  
 Musing still, like a high wind, in vain? Can seasons undeserved 2  
 come from God, unjust reward from the Almighty? What if those children 3  
 of thine conceived some faith, and he allowed pardon to take its 4  
 course? For thyself, thou hast but to keep duly true with God, make thy 5  
 plea to his omnipotence. Then, if thou comest before him innocent and 6  
 upright, he will give thee audience betimes; he will establish thee in thy 7  
 possessions again, as one that enjoys his favour. A poor thing thy old 8  
 prosperity will seem, matched with the abundance he gives thee now.

Ask counsel of the ages that are long past; let the experience of former 9  
 men overrule thee. How blind are we, creatures of a day, whose time on 10  
 earth passes like a shadow! Those fathers of ours will be thy best 11  
 teachers, and this is the advice their wisdom offers thee: Never yet grew 12  
 a bush without moisture, nor road-bed that lacked water; fade it never, 13  
 so long as thou, in its first flower, before man have time to gather it. So 14  
 feel their happiness, who leave God unremembered; so fade the hopes 15  
 of the false heart. Little shall their recklessness avail them; in thralls 16  
 of passion they put themselves. Or say they are like a sinking place, that 17  
 clings to a falling house, come down it must, for all the support they give 18  
 it; a place that seems well walled enough, spreads abroad its early shoots, 19  
 but only till the sun rises; wrapped about stones are the roots of it, and 20  
 when all its dwelling-place; yonder sun must needs dash to life, and the 21

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew tradition is that the man originally was, "What I always be a burden to thee?" but was altered by the scribes to a derogatory phrase. There is, however, no trace of any such older reading in any of the versions.

<sup>2</sup> This verse, in the original, begins simply "They have in a falling house," but the context shows that the speaker has transferred his thought from one place metaphor to another.

- 9 garden will keep no memory of its passage. So brief its pride, they are  
 waiting even now underground, the shoots that will fill its place.  
 10 Trust me, God will not cut off the innocent, will not lead his aid to  
 11 the nation of their enemies. Ere long, he will teach these lips to smile,  
 12 that mouth to sing praise; brief shall be the triumph of the fleet, brief  
 the security of the wrong-doer.

## CHAPTER 9

- 1 **B**UT Job answered: No need to teach me that; how should a man win  
 2 his suit, quarrel against God? Who would go to law, where one  
 3 pleads on this side is arrayed against a thousand on that? His all-knowing  
 4 mind, his all-conquering arms, what man ever there yet that defied  
 5 them? God, the unseen power that can thrust mountains this way and  
 6 that, uproot them in his anger, can move earth from its place, and set all  
 7 its pillars quaking, can pervert, with a word, the sun's rising, or lightning,  
 8 under his royal seal, the very rain? He it was that spread out heaven to be  
 9 his covering, made ocean a floor under his feet; that created Accurus,  
 10 and Oris, and the Hyades, and the nooks of the south;<sup>1</sup> great wonders  
 11 he does, beyond all our understanding and all our reckoning. Hidden  
 12 from my sight, hidden from my thought, he comes and goes; comes  
 13 suddenly, and how should I defend my doings? goes suddenly, and how  
 14 should I question his? There is no baring the anger of such a God,  
 15 when even the Titanic powers obey him;<sup>2</sup> and should I defend myself, in  
 16 phrases of studied eloquence, being what I am?  
 17 Nay, though I had right on my side, I would not plead against him  
 18 in an adversary, I would sue to him for mercy as a judge. Summon him  
 19 to law if I might, and he should answer my summons, well I know he  
 20 would listen to no pleadings of mine; his storm would overwhelm me,  
 21 faster than ever the unmarked blows would fall; never a breathing-space,  
 22 never a draught but of poison! Naught avails might, when a giant  
 23 thrushes me; naught avails right, when none dares to support my  
 24 quarrel. Would I plead in defence, he turns my own words against me;  
 25 he I never so upright, he will prove me hypocrite. And innocent I am,  
 but of that I take regard no longer; I am weary of life itself.

<sup>1</sup> 'The nooks of the south'; this is presumably some astronomical allusion to which we have lost the key.

<sup>2</sup> 'The Titanic powers'; literally, in the Latin version 'those who hold up the earth.' The Hebrew text is generally understood as referring to the powers of Chaos over which, by an allegory, Almighty God is pictured as triumphing at the Creation.

Still unchanged in the burden of my sorrows; innocent and guileless, as he sweeps all away.<sup>1</sup> If his vengeance must fall, should not a single blow be sufficient? Why does he look on and laugh, when the unoffending, too, must suffer? So the whole world is given up into the power of wrong-doers; he is blind the eyes of justice. He is accountable for it; who else?

Swift as a crystal mirror my days pass, and joyless each one, like a gleamer gliding down streams,<sup>2</sup> or an eagle swooping on its prey. Not now, as I have been lulled to put away such talk as this, was a soft face and live on the rack no more; but even the warning came, frosts pale were on its cheek for me; still thou wouldst hold me guileless, wouldst not spare.<sup>3</sup> Blamed I must be, in spite of all; vain was my striving, vainly I re-washed me in water pure as snow, kept my hands shivering clean, thy commands must roll me in the mire again, till the very clothes I wear show the work of me! I cannot meet him in judgement as man to man, he claims an impartial hearing for my plea: there can be no arbiter between us, to claim jurisdiction over both. Let him lay by his rod, let his thunders cease to daunt me; then I will speak out bravely to his face; it is fear that so holds me dumb.

## CHAPTER 10

OH, I am weary of life; I will speak out, come what may; my soul is too exhausted for silence. I will protest against my sentence, as I demand to know why his judgement is so cruel. Is it well done in thee to play the tyrant, to spurn me, the creature of thy own hands, to trample on the ill designs of the godless? Are thou open of thine hands after all? Is thy sight, too, blinded, like the sight of man? Hast thou a merciful's span of life, is thy reign brief like the reign of a mortal king, that thou must search for faults in me, labour to convict me of wrong done, when thou knowest full well that I am innocent, knowest that I am in thy power beyond hope of rescue?

It was thy hand that made me, no part of me but is thy fashioning; and with thee canst not with all in a moment? Then the craftsman, though

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text of this verse opens with the words, 'It is one thing,' a phrase which is generally interpreted, 'It is all one' (whether I live or die, or perhaps, whether I am in guile or innocent). But there is no evidence that the English idiom was familiar to the Hebrew mind.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, in the Latin version, 'images fleeting brief,' the phrase in the Hebrew text is usually rendered, 'whirls made of vapours.'

<sup>3</sup> In verses 27 and 28, the Latin as it stands does not yield any natural sense that is appropriate to the context; the rendering given above incorporates it in the light of the Hebrew text.

10 of thy thy handiwork, and must all be ground to dust again? With all thy  
 11 milking, cheese of thy pressing, were flesh and skin that clothed me,  
 12 bone and sinew that built up my frame; the life given by thee, by thee  
 13 maintained; thy vigilance was all my safety. Only in thy heart the memory  
 14 of this is stored, but I know thou hast not forgotten. And was it thy  
 15 purpose to spare me for a little, if I sinned, but absolute no never? Was  
 to me, if I rebelled against thee? And if I remained innocent, what then?

Why, I would be drowned in misery and despair till I could lift up my  
 16 head no more. Or if I did, that were pride in me, to be buried down in a  
 17 bottom is buried; thou wouldst devise fresh miracles of torment, wouldst  
 bring fresh witnesses against me, redouble thy vengeful strokes, array  
 against me a new host of punishments.

18 Why didst thou ever take me from the womb; why could I not perish  
 19 there, never to meet man's eyes; a being without being, casted from  
 20 womb to tomb? Brief, brief is my span of days; for a little leave me to  
 21 myself, to find some comfort in my misery. Soon I must go to a land  
 whence there is no returning, a land of darkness, death's shadow over  
 22 it; a land of gloomy night, where death's shadow lies over all, and no  
 power hurls it, only everlasting dread.

## CHAPTER 11

1 **T**HEN answered Sophar the Naamathite: So ready to speak, be ready  
 in thy turn to listen; gifts will not make an intercession of thee.  
 2 Must all keep silence till thou hast done; shall none make answer to thy  
 3 railing? Still thou wilt have it that all thy dealings<sup>1</sup> are upright, that thy  
 4 heart, as God sees it, is pure. Would he but speak one word to thy ear,  
 5 make thee his confidant? Would he but reveal to thee the secrets of his  
 wisdom, in its ordered variety? Then wouldst thou learn that the penalty  
 6 he is exacting of thee is less, far less, than thy sin deserve. What, wouldst  
 thou snatch out the ways of God, have knowledge unconfined of his  
 7 omnipotence? High as heaven is that wisdom, and thy reach so small;  
 8 deep as hell itself, and thy thought so shallow! Far as earth is unsearched,  
 9 wide as ocean, will he sweep them all away, or confine them all in a little  
 10 space, there is no guessing him.<sup>2</sup> He knows the like hearts of men, sees  
 11 wickedness there, and wouldst thou have him overlook it? Poor fool,

<sup>1</sup> 'Thy dealings', the Hebrew text gives 'thy decisions,' but this is untenable. Job has claimed to be innocent, not to be inflexible. The Latin word used here means 'dealings' generally in such passages as in Kings 4:5, Heb. 4:17.

<sup>2</sup> The Latin version differs here from the Hebrew text, the meaning of which is quite uncertain.

that will have a mind of their own, and think they were born free as the wild ass!

But see, thy heart once guided right, thy hands outspread to him in prayer, thou hast but to cleanse thy hands of their wrong-doing, and thy dwelling-place of the guilt that defiles it. Then thou mayest lift up thy head again, free from reproach, woe no more, trouble no more. There is mischief of thine shall be forgotten, or remembered graciously, the floods that are overpast. Radiance of noon shall dispel twilight, dawn shall rise in where darkness seemed to envelop thee; thine confidence shall be true, as truth lays; hidden away in safety<sup>1</sup> thou shalt sleep secure; and that sort is of thine, none shall disarm, unless a man shall come to overtake thy career.

The godless another doom awaits; their eye shall grow faint with watching, and no sleep shall ever reach them; no other prospect they have but despair.

## CHAPTER 12

**B**UT Job answered: Strange, that you alone should have the gift of reason; that when you die, wisdom must die too! Well, I too have my thoughts; I will yet try a fall with you, this knowledge you bring me is knowledge common to all. For all his friends' railing, a man such as I will still reason God so answer for his doings!<sup>2</sup> the simplicity of the upright was ever a laughing-stock, and indeed, it is but a rucklight, displayed by shrewd and prosperous folk, but it waxes its wane.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, see how well the robbers mass their houses, braving God's anger, and yet in all things he lets them have their way! Dost thou doubt it? The very beams will tell thee, the birds in air will be thy counsellors; the whirl is known in every corner of the earth, the fish in the sea will make it known to thee; none doubts, I tell thee, that all this is the Lord's doing: all living things that breathe, all the spirits of all mankind, lie in in the hollow of his hand. As surely as the ear judges words, and the mouth is quicken the taste of food, so surely as these truths in ancient sayings; it is in this things experience.

<sup>1</sup> 'Hidden away in safety' literally 'strong in.' It can hardly be supposed that the Latin version intends an allusion to burial.

<sup>2</sup> 'Whomsoever God so answer for his doings' literally, 'bail in God and he will answer him,' but it seems likely that Job is referring to judicial intervention; cf. 2.2, 9.25, 13.22.

<sup>3</sup> 'Thou waxes in the Hebrew text here are unappreciable of other interpretations than those given by the Latin version and its sense is probably better stated 'The shrewd and prosperous make light of a man's wits, when his fate are just ready to overtake him.'

10 All God's doing; his are the wisdom and the power, to him belong  
 11 his judgments in art and discernment. The ruin he makes, none can defend,  
 12 his imprisonment none can escape; withholds he the rain, all is dried  
 13 up; sends he rain, it floods all the ground. Yes, he is strong, he is wise,  
 14 made the horse's heart as easily as the flock's. He can thrust the con-  
 15 queller, because the judge, exchange the king's holdfast for the rope of a  
 16 prisoner, lead the priest away unrobed, discard the noble, bewitch the  
 17 lips that never err'd, rob the rider of his prodence, bring prisoner into  
 18 disgrace, relieve the oppressed.<sup>1</sup> Things deep hidden in darkness he  
 19 reveals, kindles the light where death's shadow lay, brings growth or  
 20 ruin to a people, and what he has raised restores. The hearts of child-  
 21 ren he bewilders, leading them by false paths to ruin swift, till all light  
 fails, and they grope about in darkness, wander aimless like a druidard  
 after his wine.

## CHAPTER 13

1 **E**YES not ears nor wit are wanting to me, and I know all this as  
 2 loved as you, but I will still try a fall with you. Or rather, it is to God,  
 3 the omnipotent, I will speak against him for my complaint; but first I  
 4 would prove you what you are, unskillful planners all of you, that follow  
 5 false rules of your craft. Would you but hold your tongues once for all  
 6 it were your best wisdom. Listen while I refute you; mark well what are  
 7 my pleadings. Do you think God stands in need of your shifts, your  
 8 lying advocacy? Are you God's hired partisans, resolved to acquit  
 9 him? Why then, beware of his own infallible word; think you he will  
 10 be blinded, as men are blinded, by your sophistries? Nay, he himself will  
 11 be the first to blame you for wrongful attachment to his cause: your  
 12 case, then, to show his offended majesty, to answer before his tribunal. Your  
 13 wise maxims will vanish into dust, your blustering confidence prove to  
 be things of clay.  
 14 Nay, hold your tongues for a little, while I say out my mind. Do not  
 15 ask why I set my teeth so firmly,<sup>2</sup> take my life in my hand, let him slay  
 me if he will! I seek his favour;<sup>3</sup> needs must that I should make my

<sup>1</sup> 'Relieve the oppressed', according to the Hebrew text, 'loosen the galle of the strong', the Latin rendering is quite out of keeping with the context.

<sup>2</sup> Literally 'you (in the Hebrew text, carry) my teeth in my neck'; evidently this was a proverbial way of expressing rashness, like that in the second half of the verse.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'even if he slays me, I will hope in him.' But the true sense of the words is hard to determine; there are two translations of the Hebrew text, one reading 'I will wait' and the other 'I will not wait.'

defense before him, and spare me: he will let the guilty show his presence, is not I. Nay, hear me out; let me open my mind in full; should I stand my trial, I know that I must be found innocent! Only let me state my account! Why must I die unheard?<sup>1</sup>

But two rights I claim, if I am to face thee openly: withdraw thy chastening hand, and desert me with thy terrors no longer. Then, if thou wilt call me in question, I will make reply; or let me speak, and be thou ready with thy answer. Tell me, what are all these transgressions, there is fault thou findest in me? What crime, what wrong-doing is mine? Why is it that thou turnest thy back on me, and wilt treat me as an enemy? As I will wrangle with a flying leaf, chase a wing of storm, as keep this jealous as record against me, treat me with the silliness of my people! To hold me as a close prisoner, watch me wherever I go, track my foot-prints, when I am as free as better than riding cannon, than a garment fluted away by the wind!

## CHAPTER 14

SO full man's life, woman-born, so full of trouble, brief as a flower is that blooms and withers, fugitive as a shadow, changing all the while; and is he worth that watchfulness of thine, must thou needs call him to account? (Who can discern what is born of tainted stock, save a thou alone, who alone hast being?) Brief, brief are man's days; thou keepst count of the months left to him, thou dost appoint for him the bound he may not pass. And wilt thou not leave him undisturbed, to enjoy his little day of duality?<sup>2</sup>

Were he but as the trees are! A tree has hope to live by, pollarded, it is still given green, and fresh branches spring from it. Root and trunk old and withered, down to the dusty earth, but at the touch of water it revives, and the leaves come, as they came when it first was planted. For as in mortal men, death's a stripping, and a breathing out of the soul, and all is over. Where is the sea, when its waters dry up, the shore when its bed is empty? So man falls asleep, never to rise again while he lies undisturbed; for that sleep there is no waking, there is no counting him. Ah, if the

<sup>1</sup> It is possible to interpret the Hebrew text as meaning, "Who is there that will accuse me? If anybody can, then I will remain silent and go to my death!" but this fits the context less naturally.

<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew text, this verse reads simply, "Who can bring the close from the untold? Not we!" there is no agreement either as to the meaning of the phrase or as to its relevance to the discussion, and some think it has been accidentally misplaced.

<sup>3</sup> Or possibly, "Wilt thou not leave him undisturbed for a little, poor drudge, until his welcome day (of release) comes to him?"

- gate were only a place of shelter, where thou wouldst hide me away until the anger was spent, with a sin appalled when thou wouldst look back thyself of me again?<sup>1</sup> Strange thought, if the dead could rise! Then I could wait willingly enough, all the time of my campaigning, till I were returned
- 11 at my post: thou wouldst return me at last, and I would answer thy questions, thy creature, safe in thy loving hand?
- 12 So jealous a record thou keepst of every step I take, and hast thou no pardon for thy failure? Instead, must thou seal up every wrong-doing of mine, as in a casket, cover away, as with a platen, my transgressions?
- 13 May there be no help for it, once side-side or cliff that begins to crumble scales away and vanishes at last, water hollows into the hard rock, and floods wear away the firm ground at last, and thou hast made no less a inevitable man's doom. His brief journey thou takest away for ever, the lively hue changes, and he is gone. His children rise to haunts, sink to a shame, and he woe the wiser, nothing man felt save the pain that sick him in life, the grief that fret his soul.<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER 15

- 1 **T**HEN answered Eliphaz the Themanite: This is not a wise man's way, to answer with windy sophistries, as if thou hadst the dream in the blood. Ill matched for the contest, prating to thy heart. Wane, if thou hadst thy wit, all reverence should be abolished, all devotion at an end. Thy tongue takes its instructions from a sinful heart; this is rebel speech. No need for me to prove thee a guilty man, thy words prove it; thy own lips arraign thee.
- 1 Tell me, was there some private bird; wast thou made before the hills? Hast thou overheard the secrets of God's council-chamber, that thou thinkest him no match for thee in wisdom? What knowledge hast

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gen. 4.8.

<sup>2</sup> The unfulfilled conditions here expressed is represented in the Latin version as if it were something which is actually happening, but with a rendering is plainly out of harmony with the context.

<sup>3</sup> There has been much discussion over the meaning of these two verses, and over the condition which they connect to the argument. Some think they are part of the unfulfilled conditions which goes before, and that the hiding away of man's sin is represented as something desirably done, that they express the actual condition of things, and that man's sin are represented as covered up against him, i.e., remaining unforgiven. Once again the suspicion arises that they really belong to a different context.

<sup>4</sup> The words 'in life' do not occur in the Hebrew text, and some think that the verse refers to the (passively self-regarding) unsatisfactoriness of the soul after death.



then but we share it, what discomfort greater than ours? We too have 10  
 sorrows among us, grey-headed men that have seen more days than any  
 father of thine. It should be no great matter for God to comfort thee, if 11  
 thy saddest speech did not forbid it; what mean these transports, why 12  
 does that eye roll so wildly? What pride is this that would cross God 13  
 himself, moving thee to such violence? It is not in vain to live a life all 14  
 blameless, never one of women yet found acquitted. Fickle nature God 15  
 finds among his very angels; the purity of heaven itself doth not soothe  
 him: what of man, the abominable, the defiled, whilst ever for wrong- 16  
 doing?

Listen, while I tell thee my mind; thou shalt hear what my own eyes 17  
 have witnessed; thou shalt hear what wise men have said, making known 18  
 the credence of their fathers, that dwell ever in their own land, and bid 19  
 us converse with strangers.

Privately though he carry himself all his days, the godless man is on the 20  
 rack; how long will his tyrannous reign last? All the while, secret whispers 21  
 in his ear; danger there is none, but he sees plots everywhere. Treads 22  
 he by dark ways, he never hopes to see light again, swears here, swears  
 there to threaten him: ventures he out in search of food,<sup>1</sup> he doubts not 23  
 his last hour is at hand: dangers threaten him, difficulties hedge him 24  
 round, as though he were a king making ready for battle. And all because 25  
 he chose God for his enemy, watched himself against compassions; heed 26  
 he high in air he made the onslaught, proud of his wrong slaves, like a bull 27  
 with hanging dewlap and well-covered flanks.<sup>2</sup>

Now he is like some plant that grows<sup>3</sup> amid deserted shores, upon 28  
 heaves uninhabited that lie in ruins; no root shall he strike into the earth, 29  
 of true wealth or abiding prosperity; never leave the shadows, but he is  
 withered up by the heat or carried away by the blast. Let no fool 30  
 hope to bide him that he can buy off his doom; fall he must before his 31

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text here is usually understood as meaning, 'And there are  
 covenants with God's creations, his word speaks greatly to thee.'

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text here may be corrupt, and has to be restored with con-  
 siderable interpretation. 'He thought himself at some future time) wondering  
 (to look) for food, (and saying to himself) Where is any to be found?' In any  
 case, it is probable that Elihu is alluding to the course of a bad conscience,  
 not some word punishment of the wicked.

<sup>3</sup> The words 'like a bull' are not in the original, but the Hebrew notion of  
 fit as a symbol of strength cannot well be expressed in English without  
 the use of simile.

<sup>4</sup> In the original, simply 'he dwells.' Some have imagined that the wicked  
 men live among the ruins of his victims' houses; others, that he is represented  
 as doing God's vengeance by attacking scattered cities (cf. Job 18:14). But in  
 view of the plain metaphor which follows, it seems more probable that Elihu is  
 comparing the wicked to an ill-rooted plant, like the fig in 18:11-13.

11 time; withered the palm, despoiled the vine with clusters yet unripe,  
 12 shed the olive's leaves. Barren, barren the schinner's plot; the house  
 13 of the perjured man shall burn about his ears. Vainly engendered, borne  
 in the womb, brought forth, their load of misery and infamy and shame.

## CHAPTER 14

1 **B**UT Job answered: Old tales and old comfort; you are all  
 2 alike. Wind is but wind; there is no end to them, and they cost  
 3 thee nothing. Believe me, I could do as well, were you in my case, talk  
 4 the language of consolation, and mock me all the while, speak of un-  
 5 comfort, and make mouths at you under a show of pity.<sup>1</sup> But here is  
 6 grief words cannot assuage, nor silence banish; grief that bows me down  
 7 till my whole frame is likeness; these flattered cheeks are the witness of it.  
 8 And now a false accuser dares me to try fate and baffle me!<sup>2</sup> One that  
 9 vents all his spite against me, gathers his truth malignantly, watches  
 10 me with fierce eyes like no mercy. Mouths that deride me, hands that  
 11 smite me on the cheek in reproval, hearts that delight in my anguish, O  
 12 what if neighbourhood God has condemned me, what tyrants hold me  
 in their grip!  
 13 So free from care my life was, and now, suddenly as a wild beast that  
 14 feroces on its prey, dashes it to the ground, he has broken that life re-  
 15 piece. I am a mark for his archery, his arrows are all about me; still they  
 16 pierce me to the marrow, drain my life,<sup>3</sup> wound upon wound; giant hands  
 17 assail me. No wonder if I go clad in sackcloth, disfigured with sores, if  
 my fate is swollen with weeping, and on my eyelids the darkness falls.  
 18 Such is the reward of a godless life, of prayer offered without faith. I  
 change face, earth, to leave my blood unburied, never to smudge the  
 echoes of my promise; there is one in high heaven that knows the truth

<sup>1</sup> Both in the Hebrew text and in the Latin version, the exact train of thought may be variously interpreted.

<sup>2</sup> "And now a false accuser dares me to try fate and baffle me": according to some the meaning is, "My business gives open proof of it," which corresponds well with the former half of the verse. For those who adopt this rendering, it is possible to understand the words in verse 18 as referring to God himself. The "false accuser" can hardly refer to God; and only for a strong rhetorical exaggeration could it refer to Eliphaz. It seems more likely that in this sentence Job is thinking of his spiritual enemies, perhaps as he has seen them in night visions (v. 14).

<sup>3</sup> "Still they pierce me to the marrow, drain my life": literally, "without ceasing he wounds my bones (in the Hebrew, *kidney*), and pours out my bowels (in the Hebrew, *gall*) upon the ground."

and must bear witness. Friends, press on; these years of mine leave their challenge to a God! Ah, could but a mortal bring God to justice, as man or angelic mind! Merciful art I; swiftly my years pass, and by the road I sit, and there is no returning.

## CHAPTER 17

**B**ROKEN my will to live, shortened my days, the grave my only passage; my eyes linger on sights of bitterness, never through my heart.<sup>1</sup> Lord, wouldst thou but vindicate me, and let me right with thee? I care not who dies for or against me.<sup>2</sup> For thee, at best, I care not; they have robbed their hearts of all discernment, and they shall have no cause for boasting. Shall thanks a man, too, have for coming out the spoils, while his children go hungry?<sup>3</sup>

A public by-word God has made me, a warning in all men's sight; my eyes grown dim, my whole frame wasted away, in my resentment. Here is one bewitched from the house of heaven; eagerly do I encounter men, to see knives pruned; will the just be true to their resolve any longer? Will they be encouraged to keep their hands clean?<sup>4</sup> Nay, ah, return to the charge as often as you will; I do not look to find a wise man among you.

Swift pass my days, my mind distracted with whirling thoughts, that make night into day for me, as through the house of darkness I sought the dawn. Waiting for what? The grave is my destined home; among the shadows I must make my bed at last; only from corruption I claim a father's welcome, mother's and sister's greeting the worms shall offer me; what hope is this? What I passionately or impatiently, who cares? Long is the sleep yet I must go down, all of me; even there, in the dust, shall I find rest.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text here is generally understood as meaning, "There are moans at my side, and my eyes dwell on their provocations."

<sup>2</sup> Literally, in the Latin version, "Deliver me, Lord, and set me down to rest; and he who will fight against me"; in the Hebrew text, "O hell for me, Lord, who (yet) will be my enemy?"

<sup>3</sup> Literally, "He promises spoils to his companions, and the eyes of his children will languish." The Hebrew text is very obscure, and is thought by many to be corrupt; the copious ones have been baffled by the unexpected appearance of a gerund, perhaps on the notion of boasting.

<sup>4</sup> This verse has been lost into the darkness if it is understood as a question; those who take it as a statement regard it as an allusion to Job himself.

<sup>5</sup> The Hebrew text here is largely different and wholly obscure.

## CHAPTER 11

**1** **T**HEN answered Baldad the Shuhite: Ah, you word-mongers, you have never had enough! First grasp our meaning, and we might agree to some purpose; but no, to men like these we are worthless as dumb beasts.<sup>1</sup> See with what fury he smite his own bosom! Must earth be despoiled, must the rocks be torn from their place, to gratify one man's despairing-mood?

**2** Nay, the hopes of the wicked men are a light that shall be put out; a very will of the whips, darkness shall fall over his dwelling-place, and the lamp that shone there will shine no more. The bulwarks of his own strife smite him prisoner; his own devices stand against him; into the trap he walks, he struggles vainly with its meshes; now he is laid by the heels! Mourn over his burning throat.<sup>2</sup> The ground sows with snare, pit-falls about his path, fears attend him everywhere, catch everywhere at his feet.

**3** His strength brought low by famine, hunger gnawing at his sides and smearing all his beauty, death in its primal guile shall devour these limbs.<sup>3</sup> Gaze the security of his home, now he tumbles far under the heels of rampant death; in his house-mongers<sup>4</sup> shall dwell, on his lands belittled as he is smitten, none shall grow beneath nor harvest rise from it.<sup>5</sup> Gone

the flame of him, gone the name of him, from virtue and courage-side,<sup>6</sup> eclipsed in utter darkness, lost to the world. Root nor branch of his posterity shall remain among his folk, vanished every trace of him from the lands he knew. That comes with terror and excitement high and low shall witness.<sup>7</sup> Here (they will say) was a house of wrong-doing; he who lived here, lived a stranger to God.

<sup>1</sup> Job is here addressed in the plural. Some perceive the name of the whole book as a kind of public debate (cf. viii.) and suppose that the audience was directed in its sympathy. But it seems more likely that 'you' means 'thou and people like thee,' 'you critics of Providence.'

<sup>2</sup> The word rendered 'throat' in the Latin is of uncertain meaning.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'fire-born death,' in the Hebrew text, 'the fire-born of death.' This is usually interpreted of fever or some other kind of disease, but without evidence. The context here would suggest rather starvation.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, in the Latin version, 'the dead man's fellows.' The phrase in the Hebrew text is of doubtful meaning; some think that death is referred to. 'On his land'; the Latin version repeats 'in his house,' but two different words are used in the Hebrew text, and the latter is a more general word for the place where a man lives.

<sup>5</sup> Or possibly 'from him,' cf. verse iv.

<sup>6</sup> See iii-vj. The words of this passage are represented by the Latin, essentially, as repeating a wish.

<sup>7</sup> 'High and low'; literally 'the low and the high,' which may also be explained as meaning 'near generations and earlier generations.' Some interpret the Hebrew text as meaning 'men of the men and men of the men.'

## CHAPTER 19

**B**UT Job answered: What, will you torment me still? Every word of  
 1 years a flesh blow of the hammer? How many times is this you have  
 fallen on me, troubled me down without rest? If, moreover, I have com-  
 2 mitted some fault, it concerns none but myself: not for you to claim  
 3 authority over me, bring harm to me my disgrace!

How to make you understand that God has misjudged me, taught me  
 4 in his will? If I say out upon that my wrongs, then is mine to land me,  
 5 once to take vengeance of my plea: my path hedged in, so that there is  
 6 no escape, my direction lost, and I banighted. By him discredited, dis-  
 7 creased, by him left defenceless on every side, I go my way: a fire torn  
 8 up by the roots has none to hope for than I. Against me all his anger is  
 9 aroused, I say that enemy against whom he creates all his forces, to rule  
 10 over me, to bring down my dwelling place. Scattered am I from my  
 11 habitation, a stranger to all that know me, forsaken by my kindred, by  
 12 my friends despised. Friends that dwell in my house, ay, and the very  
 13 serving-women, stare at me, the alien, the unknown, my servants do not  
 14 come at my call, I am not spoken to: fair, my wife shuns the breath of me,  
 15 to my own flesh and blood I am a suppliant. The very heavens<sup>1</sup> despise  
 16 me, yet strive when my back is turned: no angel will be reputed but he is  
 17 enemy of me, so fitted to loved but he abandons me now. And I so  
 18 wasted: skin clinging to bone, save where the lips cover my teeth, is all  
 19 that is left of me!<sup>2</sup>

Friends, friends, do you at least have pity, now when God's hand has  
 fallen on me! Would you take part in God's love and cry against me, or  
 shoulder me to your hearts' content?<sup>3</sup> Could but those words of mine be  
 written down in a book, given with a pen of iron upon tables of lead, so  
 cherished as hard flint?

This at least I know, that one even on who will vindicate me, rising up is

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'the sons of my wrath.' This may be taken as meaning 'sons of my wrath' (Job's description of his kindred being only overclouded on 1.20), or as meaning 'sons of the same wrath as myself.'

<sup>2</sup> In the Latin version, 'flesh' is the Hebrew text, 'flesh children.'

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew text appears to read 'To my side, to my flesh, my bones cling: I have clasped by the skin of my teeth.' It is difficult to see how the English phrase derived from this passage has its force.

<sup>4</sup> 'Shander me! Shander, but my flesh,' a well known Hebrew idiom.

<sup>5</sup> The word *skin*, said to mean 'a cloud,' does not occur anywhere else in Latin literature, and is thought by some to be a corruption in our Bible for *coram* 'Upon skins of lead, or perhaps upon flint.'

- as from the dust when the last day comes.<sup>1</sup> Once more my skin shall clothe  
 20 me, and in my flesh I shall have sight of God.<sup>2</sup> I myself, with my own  
 eyes, it will not be something other than myself that sees him. Deep in  
 my heart is this hope reposed.<sup>3</sup>  
 21 You that would raise the hue and cry, finding matter of complaint  
 22 against me, should rather take flight yourselves, the sword at your backs;  
 the sword that avenges wrong, proof to you that justice shall be done.

## CHAPTER 24

- 23 **T**HEN answered Sophie the Maamshite: Strange bestiality thy words  
 24 breed in me; my thoughts rear to and fro. Not deaf am I to thy  
 25 pleadings, but there is a voice in my heart gives me pause. Certain it is  
 26 that never since man found a place on earth did the wrong-deer win  
 lasting triumph; only for a little time does mastery bring him content.  
 27 Let his pride overtop heaven itself, his head be lifted high as the  
 28 clouds, he is for the dung-hill at last; none knows what has become of  
 29 him. Vanished and gone like a dream, the phantom of potherlight,  
 30 unmarked by human eyes, lost to the scenes he knew! Crushing poverty  
 shall be his children's lot; his arms shall yield their own harvest of  
 31 shame, all the lusty vigour of his frame doomed, like himself, to silence  
 32 and the dust. Sweet in the mouth is the taste of evil-doing; how the  
 33 tongue cherishes it! How he treasures it, loath to lose the sweet pleasure  
 34 of his palate! But once he that fed much his belly, nor the gall of adders  
 35 is so venomous. The wealth he loved to swallow, disgorge he must; God  
 36 will make his belly vomit it; poisoners as the asp's head or the viper's  
 37 tongue were those jakes he sucked, when he thought to enjoy streams of  
 plenty, honey and cream should have been his in rich abundance.  
 38 Suddenly he shall pay for the wrong he did, plagued in the measure  
 39 of his own false dealings. He who oppressed and rebuffed the poor shall  
 40 never prosper with his ill-gotten treasures. he, the insatiable, will not  
 41 keep what he so coveteth: he, that never had a crust to spare, will be  
 42 stripped even of all his goods. Once so full fed, now he goes in need.

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, it is the Vindictive himself, not Job, who will "stand up from the dust himself."

<sup>2</sup> The first part of this verse is untranslatable in the Hebrew text; it appears to mean "And after that, afterwards) they will strip my skin, this." Probably the reading is corrupt, for the other versions do not bear out the sense given by the Latin, "In my flesh) literally "from my flesh," which sense would interpret as meaning, "deprived of my flesh."

<sup>3</sup> v. 27. "Something other than myself," literally, "a stranger." The end of the verse, in the Hebrew text, reads "by inner thoughts lie away in my bosom."

stands in *dark*, with darkness crowding in on every side; ah for a meal to fill his belly with! But no, God's angry vengeance is let loose on him, raining down all its weapons; shame be the word, to the bow of bronze to be like a prop. Beige and bitter the dross sword thrusts; about him, to dread warlike come and go.<sup>1</sup> He hides away, where thick darkness is broods over him; straightaway a fire no human hand has kindled threatens to devour him; none beside any that would take refuge in that dwelling! Heaven will reveal the story of his crimes, earth itself *she* is revolt against him; all the promise of his nose will be laid bare and torn away, in its that hour of the Lord's vengeance.<sup>2</sup>

Such is the lot God sends to the wicked, such their divinely appointed *go* down.

## CHAPTER 31

**B**UT Job answered: Listen, do but listen to me, and then, if you will, repeat of your charity; let me have my say, and then speak on. It is not as if I have a grudge against man; I have better reason than that to be indignant. Mark my complaint well, and you shall be satisfied, hold your breath<sup>1</sup> in amazement, as I too trouble with *discreet* at the thought of it.

How is it that godless men live on, men with advancement, enjoy their riches undisturbed? Long they live, to see their posterity thrive about them, houses and gardens thronging all around. Safe and sound their dwelling-place; God's avenger passes them by; never hull of theirs failed to guard, now to sailing; blithe as herds the little children go out to play; everywhere is laughter and leap-playing; everywhere the pipe's its merry note. So, full of ease, their life passes, and they go down at last without a struggle to the grave.

And these are the men who bade God keep his distance from them, refused to learn his will;<sup>2</sup> what right had he, the Omnipotent, to their

<sup>1</sup> This sentence too, in the original, is *subject*. The Hebrew text is usually interpreted as referring to the art of drawing the arrow out of a wound.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'all darkness is succeeded in his hidden things.'

<sup>3</sup> 'The promise of his nose' literally, 'the bud of his nose,' a phrase not elsewhere paralleled. 'He laid bare,' in the Hebrew text, 'go into mine.'

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'put your hands on your mouths.'

<sup>5</sup> *vv. 14-15.* The interpretation here given to this passage is designed to make Job's remarks consistent with each other and with his general line of argument. Several of them would appear as less right especially as read in the Latin version to favour the notion that God inflicts signal punishment on evil-doers. But it seems clear that these do not reflect Job's own understanding; they are an imposed presentation of his opponents' point of view, *i.e.*, *vss. 15* and the last half of *vss. 17*.

- obedience, what advantage would they gain by offering prayer to  
 13 him? These are the godless folk whose counsel I must shun because they  
 14 cannot discern their own good fortune! Tell me, how often in my  
 15 dead are the hopes of the wicked extinguished, engulfed by the flood?  
 16 Does God's vengeance often deal out misfortune to them, sweeping  
 17 them away like chaff before the wind, edges beneath the storm?  
 18 But perhaps God is reserving for the children punishment of their  
 19 father's sin? Nay, let the sinner himself feel the retribution when it  
 20 comes; his own eyes must see the blow fall, his own lips declare to the  
 21 divine vengeance! Little he cares what befalls his posterity after he is  
 gone, though indeed be the time of its continuance.  
 22 The God that punishes judgment on his angels needs none to instruct  
 23 him? It is made for in life that signifies,<sup>1</sup> not men gone to his death-room  
 24 and strong, rich and happy, well covered with flesh, his bones full of  
 25 marrow; another, all misery and poverty, and he, no less than the other,  
 has dust for bed, worms for coverlet.  
 26 Spare me these thoughts. I know already, these reasons that would  
 27 crush me! What becomes of the tyrant's palace, of the self-die's house,  
 28 at last? Ask any wayfarer (you say) that knows them, and you shall hear  
 29 the same account of the matter: The ruler's villainy is being rewarded  
 30 for future punishment, he is being slowly drawn on to his doom. Fools,  
 how can anyone bring home his guilt to him now, punish the wrong he  
 31 did? He is being slowly drawn on to burial, with men to keep watch over  
 32 his tomb, as honoured guest in the valley's stony foot,<sup>2</sup> with a sharing of  
 mortals behind and before, past all counting.  
 33 Yea is all your consolation, while the answer you give me matches  
 34 as ill with truth.

<sup>1</sup> It is hard to see how this verse fits into the context, and some think it has been misplaced. The idea seems to be that Job's confessions are offering an apology for the Providential order such as God himself would not approve of.

<sup>2</sup> It is man's lot in life that signifies; these words are not in the original, they have been supplied so as to make the argument easier to follow. Nobody will be deceived from shuffling eyes by the fact of what may happen to his children, if he thinks that his own happiness will be scattered by his behaviour.

<sup>3</sup> The Latin here gives the strange rendering, 'the guest of Cocytus.' In pagan mythology, Cocytus was a river flowing through the underworld.



## CHAPTER 22

**THEN** answered Elihu the Themanite: A man cannot hope to <sup>1</sup>   
 implied God, even a man of perfect wisdom. Just though thou be, <sup>2</sup>   
 how is God the better for knowing thou art just? Can stainless life of <sup>3</sup>   
 thine advantage him? Or dost thou think that fear of thee will persuade <sup>4</sup>   
 him to appear in court, and prove thee to the wrong?<sup>5</sup> Must he browbeat <sup>6</sup>   
 thee over a long record of guilt,<sup>7</sup> over many heinous deeds done, committed <sup>8</sup>   
 thee of the sinner's ploddingly taking, of thy brother left to go naked <sup>9</sup>   
 while thou hadst his garment by thee, of water gorged to thirsty men, <sup>10</sup>   
 bread refused to the hungry?<sup>11</sup> Must he tell the story of a rich tyrant that <sup>12</sup>   
 had lands and hold to them, of widows sent away without return, <sup>13</sup>   
 orphans left without support, through thy means?<sup>14</sup> Must he say, that is <sup>15</sup>   
 why thou art caught in the snare, dismayed by sudden perils, left <sup>16</sup>   
 bewitched when thou thoughtest to see day, overwheeled by the <sup>17</sup>   
 unexpected flood?<sup>18</sup>

Believe that, God is high as heaven itself, reaches beyond the uttermost <sup>19</sup>   
 most man. Wouldst thou tell us that he has no knowledge of what passes, or <sup>20</sup>   
 that he leaves his doings blindly, gives no heed to our mortal doings, or <sup>21</sup>   
 that where he walks above heaven's vault, all wrapped in clouds? That to <sup>22</sup>   
 want to follow old paths of error, troubles long ago by impious feet. <sup>23</sup>   
 Scattered away before their time were the men that reasoned as a flood is <sup>24</sup>   
 engulfed the solid ground beneath them. These, beyond doubt, were or <sup>25</sup>   
 men who bade God keep his distance from them, thought the Omnipotent <sup>26</sup>   
 could give them no aid, when he had filled their shade with bloodings!<sup>27</sup>

<sup>1</sup> vs. 1-4. The Hebrew text is curiously unobscure as it stands: 'Can a man render useful service for living an innocent life to God? No, it is of service only to himself. Can the Almighty take any pleasure in the fact that thou art upright, is it any gain to him, if thou followest heinous paths? Is it because of thy fear of him that he finds fault with thee, comes to court to thy adversary?' But, although this apparently gives a satisfactory account of the various sentences, it leaves an unbridgeable gulf in logic between verse 3 and verse 4. The Latin version strikes a greatly preferable mean: God cannot be expected to agree [with] man's notions of right, since he has no motive, whether of interest or of fear, for doing so.

<sup>2</sup> The Latin version begins this sentence with the words 'Is it not rather because of . . .' But this seems due to an erroneous apprehension of the Hebrew original. The Hebrew text reads simply, 'Can not thy righteousness many and thy faith comfort?' This is generally understood as a charge brought by Elihu against Job; but such a sudden attack on Job's character would be out of keeping with the rest of the chapter, and indeed of the book. Verses 3-11 had however their place if they are understood as an imaginary address by Almighty God to an imaginary sinner (cf. Ps. 92:15-21).

16 Not for nothing do I shut their mouths! There was a right to make the  
 17 just triumphant, make innocent folk laugh aloud in scorn, to see how  
 their proud hopes vanished, and all that was left of them perished in the  
 flames.<sup>1</sup>

18 Make thy peace with Man, as thou lovest thy own well-being; so shall  
 19 thy hopes around thee. Let his lips be thy guide, his words wisdom on  
 20 thy heart. I turn back to the Almighty for thy healing, and rid thy  
 21 dwelling-place of guilt. Firm rock thou shalt have for shifting dust,  
 22 and for firm rock streams of gold; the Almighty himself will be thy  
 23 shield, and silver thou shalt never lack.<sup>2</sup> In those omnipotent arms  
 24 thou shalt rest content, thy face upward towards God himself, thy  
 25 prayer heard as soon as offered, thy vows paid as soon as done, all thy  
 26 desire thou shalt have, and all thy paths will be sunshine. He that was  
 once brought low shall be high in recovery; the downcast eye shall win  
 deliverance.

27 But the innocent shall be kept safe; in a pit of clean hands there was  
 safety even.<sup>3</sup>

## CHAPTER 34

1 **B**UT Job answered: And still I reply bitterly as ever, no growing  
 2 less heavy for the wounds I bear. Ah, if I could but find my way to  
 3 God, reach his very throne, in reprehensible accents plead my tale before  
 4 him, and learn what he would say in his defence, grasp the meaning of  
 5 all! Must his great power still be used to crush me, silence my plea by  
 6 constraint? The justice of my cause once made known to him, I should  
 triumph at last.

7 But no; travel I not as yet, I find no trace of him, none I left or  
 8 right, I have no skill to catch sight of him. And he, all the while, keeps  
 9 watch over my doings, tests me like gold the fire assays: he knows how  
 10 close I have kept to the path he traced for me, swerving never aside, true

<sup>1</sup> vs. 17-20. Some definite historical situation seems to be suggested, but it cannot be identified with certainty. The Deluge has been suggested as view of verse 17, the destruction of Sodom as view of verse 20, the death of Cain and his misdeeds (Gen. 4) as view of verse 21. It is also a possible solution.

<sup>2</sup> vs. 22, 23. The Hebrew text here is usually interpreted, "For (thou) gold-est upon the dust, and thy (gold of) Cytus upon the riches of the valleys, then the Almighty will be thy gold-est . . ." etc. The Latin version has probably failed to recognize the word for gold-est, rendering it as one verse "then thou" and in the other "against the enemy." But it is doubtful whether one present Hebrew text is genuine; it is not easy to see why Elihu should encourage a man who has just lost all his possessions to throw away his gold.

<sup>3</sup> vs. 27, 28. The sense of the Hebrew text here is doubtful.

to every moment of his, every utterance of his cherished in my heart. But what of that? He reigns without a rival, none can cross his purposes; he does what likes him best. His will once fully accomplished in me, he has many another like purpose to fulfill. What wonder if I am still afraid in his presence, if the thought of him fills me with terror? Is it he God that makes my heart with fear, his omnipotence that dreads me; that thought terrifies me, not the surrounding darkness, not the scenes which hide my view.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER 24

**SINCE** he, who is omnipotent, determines every event, how is it that those who know him seek in vain for his doom to fall?<sup>2</sup>

There are men that seize their neighbour's husband, drive women and cattle to pasture, rob the orphan of his son, take the widow's as he pleases, shoulder the poor saddle, conspire to oppress the friendless; leave others to make their living as best they may, like the wild ass in the desert, making business to scrape food for hungry mouths at home. Reap they the field that is none of theirs, strip they the vineyard wrongfully seized from its owner; let man go bare, their garments scatched away, defenceless against cold and rain on the mountain side, so that they are fain to lay the coals for lack of shelter. Their violence robs the helpless children, deplores the poor and simple; back and side must go bare, and is never a stalk left for hungry men to glean; huddled they must lie under the owner's hearth that trod the wine-press, and still are thirsty<sup>3</sup>. A cry goes up from the city streets, where wounded men lie gasping; tell me, does not God allow it to pass unheeded?<sup>4</sup>

How they shun the light, these wretches who ignore God's precepts, leave his paths untrod! The murderer must be striving before day to slay, to catch his helpless prey, or preyed, as the thieves preyed, at night. For darkness, too, the adulterer waits, no eye must scan his crafty shame; under cover of darkness he will break into the house, to keep the

<sup>1</sup> v. 17. This somewhat forced rendering seems to be the only way of reading this obscure passage, if the text is sound.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, "There are yet hidden from the omnipotent, but those who know him are ignorant of his days."

<sup>3</sup> vs. 9-11. The Latin version is here in disagreement, consistently, with the Hebrew text, which is itself very obscure. It is not always easy to see whether the subject of a particular sentence is the wicked, or their victims.

<sup>4</sup> It seems necessary to understand the end of this verse as a question otherwise the Latin fully commends the meaning, both of the Hebrew text and of the Septuagint. Grant, our own we really suppose it to have been Job's opinion.

- 11 eyes made yesterday, no light for him. To him, the first look of dawn  
is death's shadow; deep gloom is the light he waits for.  
12 Light as foam on the waters, rarely he is doomed to a life of misery;  
13 not for him the vineyard's sunny slope! Swift as snow melts under the  
14 noon-day heat, let his guilty soul pass to the grave, unpitied, with worms  
for its loose-companions, forgotten, overthrown like an unfruitful tree!  
15 The childless woman was his prey;<sup>1</sup> in vain the widow looked to him for  
16 aid; now, surely, God has pulled the tyrant down; first he has stood,  
17 but now he despairs of life itself! Time for repentance God gave him,  
18 by his guilt misused, but ever on his doings kept a watchful eye; now,  
their brief removal over, such men must pass, as all things pass, into the  
dust, be carried off, swept away like oars of wood.<sup>2</sup>  
19 But no, never the day comes! Who dares give me the law, challenge me  
in God's sight?<sup>3</sup>

## CHAPTER 25

- 1 **THE**N answered Rebeldi the Sabeen: Ah, but what power, ah, but what  
1 powers he wields, who reigns peacefully, there in high heaven! He,  
2 the lord of countless armies, he, whose light darkens every eye! And shall  
3 man, born of woman, win his suit, prove his innocence, when he is  
4 stretched with God? Does shew the moon, tarnished the sun, under  
5 his eye; poor worm that breeds corruption, what is mortal man in his  
6 pretence?

## CHAPTER 26

- 1 **B**UT Job answered: Hardly spoken, for a cause that so much needed  
2 aid! That arm of thine ever uphold the weak. Thine advice offered in  
3 that great Government of thine, to one who so lacks wisdom! A fine lesson  
4 thou hast read him, the God who gave thee breath!  
5 Sure enough, there is none but troubles before him; even the old  
6 lesson, and those who share their dwelling place under the lower depths,  
7 have to his eye in the place of shadows, oblivion like revealed. He is

<sup>1</sup> "Was his prey;" the Latin word used can mean either "fed" or "fed upon."

<sup>2</sup> *Job. 21-24.* These verses, with their threat of calamity to the wicked, should perhaps be interpreted as an ideal contemplation which, as verse 22 points out, does not seem to be needed in fact. Their exact sense is largely open to dispute.

<sup>3</sup> The meaning of the Hebrew text is probably, "reduce my words to nothingness."

was opened but the northern skies ever sceptered, poised earth on nothing: cloud-bound he holds the rain, that she would spill on earth. 4 all at once, veiled and shut in with cloud his unseen throne. While day 5 and night last, the waters keep the bounds he has decreed for them; the 6 very pillars of heaven tremble and-stuck at his will. His the power that 7 drew the seas together all in a moment, his the wisdom that struck the rebellious dragons down; his the spirit that clothed the hygeans, his the 8 hand that drew yonder writhing serpent from the womb.<sup>1</sup> Here is but a 9 small part of his doings, here is but the whisper of his voice, who dares 10 to contemplate the thunder of his full magnificence?

## CHAPTER 27

AND thus Job continued to try here his thought: As sure as he is 1 a living God, he, the omnipotent, who so achieves me justice, who 2 makes my lot in life so bitter, while life is in me, while he still grants me 3 breath, never shall these lips condone the wrong, never this tongue utter 4 the lie! Gain your point with me you shall not; I will die sooner than 5 surrender my plea of innocence. That claim, once made, I will not forget, 6 not one set in all my life will conscience reproach me. Count him 7 a knave that is my enemy, every detractor of mine a friend of wrong!<sup>2</sup>

(What is the sinner's hope worth after all, when God takes the life 8 away from him?<sup>3</sup> In that hour of need, his cry for reproof will go 9 unheard; he cannot go on for ever basking in the Almighty's favour, 10

<sup>1</sup> 'Draw' . . . from the womb's refuge, 'pinned through' are in 21-22, where the same verb is used in the Hebrew text. Here, as in that passage, the power of the sea is allegorically described as a great creature, the darkness of night (perhaps) as a writhing serpent.

<sup>2</sup> This verse may be taken, indeed, with what follows, and interpreted as meaning, 'May the sinner, the wrong-doer, live as I would have my own enemies and detractors live.'

<sup>3</sup> *see* 1-23. Three times, or more of them, are thought by some scholars to have been accidentally misplaced, belonging properly to Eliphaz's speech in ch. 22, or to some other statement by Job's interlocutors. It is noticeable that upon first reading they seem to tell against, *not for*, the point of view Job has hitherto supported, and it is certain that Job should be the speaker all through chapters 21-22 inclusive. If our present text is accurate, the following observations may be made on it. Verses 2-11 are probably concerned only with what happens when the sinner's death Job's companion has been that the sinner is not punished during life. Possibly, then, Job's speculation here takes on a new form. Still maintaining that virtue is not rewarded or vice punished in this life (and therefore that his own sufferings do not prove him guilty) he asks what is the value of the brief prosperity which came with the sinner's lifetime (*cf.* Luke 12:18-21). The secret of life now, after all, he is saying, other than the acquisition of worldly advantage. What that secret is, he proceeds to examine in the next chapter.

11 calling God to his aid. Now by God's hand laid bare, now let me  
 12 acknowledge openly the wonders of omnipotence! Not one of you but  
 knows the truth of it already; yet one and all you must be urging a like  
 plea, without the need for it!  
 13 What again, after all, does God gaze at the wicked? From his straight-  
 14 faced, what abiding possession does the man of violence receive? Some-  
 15 thing he never so many, what avails it, when the sword overtakes them,  
 16 and their children in turn must go wandering broad, when the plague gives  
 all the rest of his line their burial, and cover a widow to beset them?  
 17 What avails it, to heap up silver like the sand, buy fine clothes, too,  
 18 and think each treasure cheap as dirt. If more upright men than he,  
 more innocent than he, must wear out these clothes, share out that silver  
 19 at last? Light as the earth he builds; not as find a shelter the vineyard-  
 20 watcher weaves about him. Rich he is held to rest, but nothing takes with  
 21 him; rich he shall make no more.<sup>1</sup> Helpless in the flood, driven in dark-  
 22 ness by the storm, carried off, as if storm or whirlwind had swept him  
 23 away, he is reared before the pillars unaltered, hands dipped in  
 triumph, tongue blessing in, destined as he goes.)

## CHAPTER 28

1 **W**HERE, then, does wisdom lie? Easy to meet where the veins of  
 2 silver run, where gold-ore is refined, where iron is dug from the  
 3 depths of earth, and rocks must be melted to yield copper. See how man  
 has done away with the darkness, has pierced into the very heart of  
 4 things, into caves under ground, black as death's shadow! Where yonder  
 mine cuts them off from the shepherd-folk, the richest sell, forgotten;  
 5 lost to all track, far from the haunts of men.<sup>2</sup> The earth, from whose

<sup>1</sup> Literally, in the basic version, 'The rich man when he goes to sleep will take nothing with him; he will open his eyes and find nothing.' The Hebrew text means to mean, 'Rich he shall be down, and it shall see ruinous for, he shall never lie down again; he will open his eyes, and—nothing.' Conceivably this refers to a condition in which pain comes upon the sleeper in a single night, but more probably it refers to his death, and the words 'he will open his eyes' are only figurative.

<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew text, this verse means 'The mine divides for, he divides the content from with a design resistant the forgotten ones from the fact they have languished from mankind they have wandered for, removed.' The Latin version gives, 'The current divides from the veiled people those whom the fear of the poor man has forgotten, those who are far from the beaten track.' The guess of modern scholars which would identify the mine as a pit-shaft, and use a reference to miners willing to eat fire in hanging ropes, thus make nothing of the usage of words as to the remoteness of the content. The text is probably correct, but we may presume that it refers to the remoteness and hiddenness of mining operations, not to contemporary conditions of labour.

surface our bread comes to us, must be probed by fire beneath, till the rocks yield sapphires, and the clods gold. Here are passages no bird & diacemon in its flight, no valiant's eye has seen; that never gave seeing & merchant's shofet, or the lioness a hair. Boldly man marches himself against the flint, uproots the mountain, cuts channels through the rock, where as things of price have blinded his eyes, narrowly he scans the river's depths, in and brings to light all they hide. But wisdom, tell me where is search as for wisdom; tell me in what name discernment best?

How should man set a price on it? This earth, our pleasant home, it yields no notion of it; Nor here, where the abyss beneath us, and the sea is where, Nor here. Not for pure gold is it harnessed, or weighed against it silver in the balance; not the bright veins of the lilies, nor jewel of a sardonyx, nor sapphire can vie with it; it is not to be matched with or treasures of glass or gold, rivalled by all the goldsmith's workmanship. [Do not talk of coral or of crystal! for wisdom you must make deeper, or search still, with wisdom the ropes from Arabia and the finest gold itself is cannot compare.

Where, then, does wisdom come to us; where is discernment to be as found? That is the secret kept hidden from beast on earth and bird in its hollow; the shadow-world of death claims no more than to have heard of the rumor of it. Only God knows the way to it, only God can tell us where it lies, for whose view reaches to the world's end, sees all that is passed under the wide heavens. He, when first he took work and is measuring-day to set wind and water their task, when he appointed a season for the rain's abiding, and a track for the whirling storm, descended to wisdom already; traced its place, and set all in order, and mastered it.

To man, he has told this much, that wisdom is finding the Lord; there is his discernment, in seeking the evil path.

## CHAPTER 29

AND thus Job continued to lay bare his thought: Alas for the changes the months have brought with them! Alas for the old days, when God was my protector, when his light shone above me, his eyes guiding me through the darkness! Days of ripe maturity, when God was my bond's familiar guest, he, the Almighty, at my side! I had my children still about me; the milk boiled in sack at my feet, no rock so hard but my silver bathed it in oil. Went I to the city gate, there was my seat

<sup>1</sup> Literally, in the Lxx version, "things high and things looking out" to the Hebrew text, the second half of the verse refers to a third kind of jewel, perhaps pearl.

1 ready for me in the open square; now the young men to make place for  
 2 me, now the aged to do me honour; nobles fell about, and waited, flaps  
 3 on lip, words failed the ablest men, and counsel they gave no more.  
 4 None heard the voice of me then, but called me a happy man; none  
 5 watched my doings then, but spoke in my praise. Four men are helpless  
 6 against me in my rage; I was the welcome refuge of the distressed,  
 7 the salve of the widow. Dustful observance was still the variance I wore,  
 8 my robe and crown integrity: in me, the blind found sight, the lame  
 9 strength, the poor a father. None so ready to give the stranger's crust as  
 10 I was: break upon the rings of the wrong-doer and reach the prey  
 11 from his teeth.  
 12 Here, thought I, I have built myself a nest to die in; here, like some  
 13 palm-tree, I shall defy the years, like a tree that spreads out its roots  
 14 to the river-bank, on whose leaves lodges the dew; my time never  
 15 shall diminish, never worn out the time I have. How eagerly men hang  
 16 upon my words, intent to learn what counsel I would give, nor ventured  
 17 to speak when I had said! A grievous affliction my words fell. Like  
 18 autumn rain on the spring showers on lips against. I smiled on them  
 19 though they were new to ill at ease, and the encouragement of my glance  
 20 proved failed them. Delighted I to be their leader, the first place was mine;  
 21 yet even when I sat like a king with his retinue about him, I would con-  
 22 sider the mourner's tears.

## CHAPTER 30

1 **AND** now! Now I am a laughing-stock, even to younger men; a flock  
 2 of such have bereft as their sheep-dog of mine never needed! So  
 3 profuse their puny strength, I would have let them die before ever they  
 4 came to maturity. Stumbling men, they should have been in the waste,  
 5 unknown, haggard and worn, creeping mallow and tree-bark and  
 6 juniper-wood for their diet, and making great howl and cry after such  
 7 deliverance, as they pluck them from the hill-sloped. Borne away and  
 8 cast and rock their dwelling-place, they were glad of so much shelter,  
 9 a humble thicket should be their welcome refuge. A careless and a  
 10 careless herd, earth is well rid of them. O that I should be a song  
 11 and a by-word on such lips as these! That they laugh and show me, and  
 12 make bold to spit in my face, being what they are! Now God has made  
 13 me a mark for his archery, now he has put a bit in my mouth; when my

1 m. 1-31. All through this chapter, the expressions are forced, and the im-  
 ageries of thought difficult to follow; it seems doubtful, in some cases, whether  
 the true text has been preserved or no.



fair spring was overcast by calamity,<sup>1</sup> every passer-by might throw me down, like a flood they swept over me, trampled down my path, took me to covens and everywhere else, where there was none to bring relief. Once in breach made, one gate forced, they might fill upon me all at once, and add their weight to my misery.

All that I was, is gone, the ambition, the happiness that was mine as swept away the clouds before the storm; my heart is dead within me, a prey to long despair. By night, anguish visits my frame; sleepless the hours that come on me, their pale<sup>2</sup> faces seem to eat away the flowery garments as I wear, things that about me like the collar of my coat. No balm I thus can find in the vision, little thought of as dust or ash; unheard I cry to to them, unregarded I stand in thy presence; so hardened is thy heart, so pitilessly thy blows fall upon me. Didst thou create me, lift me so high as in air, only to hurl me down to ruin? I know well enough that they will to bring me to the grave at last; it is the house thou hast appointed for all living men; but surely thou dost not want thy power only to destroy, so surely thou hast mercy on the fallen? I cannot know what it is to pity the afflicted, to shed tears over human need! But no, hope I for better things, I no hope in vain; ever deeper the darkness shrouds to eyes straining for the light. Still my heart is in turmoil, groined still by fresh despair; I go on weeping, my face blacker than ever the sun's heat made it, dim up in public, and close audience for my woe; crying so dimly as if I had no faithful<sup>3</sup> for my brethren, services for my company. And all the while, so slow to discover this truth, so slow this fraud! What wonder if all, it with me, is murmuring and lament, if the music of harp and flute is heard no more?

## CHAPTER 31

**AND** this was a man that had bound his eyes over by covenant, never should even his fiery dwell upon the thought of a maid! Well I know that God Almighty in high heaven would have neither part nor lot with me else; rule for the ruler he down to, striving for the wrong-doer. Tell me, does not this God watch over every path I take, trace my footsteps one by one? Walk I by crooked ways, run I eagerly after false

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'calamities come at the right hand of me speaking.' The Hebrew text is usually interpreted as meaning, 'the trouble rose up to attack me on my right hand.'

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'their make-up'; the sense of the Hebrew text is quite uncertain here.

<sup>3</sup> 'Follower' is the Greek text literally 'pursuer.'

1 a dealing, he can weigh my offences with true scales; let God himself bear  
 2 witness to my innocence! Have I strayed from my course, has my heart  
 3 followed the lust of my eyes, are my hands raised with wrong? Then let  
 4 another man enjoy the harvest I have sown, then let my corn be doomed  
 5 to extinction! Have wives of women entangled my brain; did I lie in wait  
 6 under my neighbour's window? Then be my own wife another's whore,  
 7 strangers be her bedfellows! That went via in me, and find wrong  
 8 done; that fire, once kindled, will rage till all is consumed, never a crop  
 9 shall escape it.

10 Did I refuse justice to manservant of mine or woman servant, when  
 11 they had complaint to bring? Then it shall go hard with me when it is  
 12 God's turn to pronounce judgement; how shall I meet his scrutiny, who  
 13 fashioned in the womb this one and that, man and master alike? Did I  
 14 sleep some pace near the slat he-crowed, keep the widow waking for her  
 15 pittance, sit over my meal alone, and never an orphan boy to share  
 16 it? That were an ill return for the loving care that has borne me company  
 17 as I grew up from childhood, ever since I left my mother's womb.<sup>1</sup> Did  
 18 I open the naked that were ready to perish of cold, too poor to find  
 19 a clothing; did I never earn thanks from the back that went bare till snow  
 20 of my flock warmed it? Did I shun the friendship, when I could  
 21 secure judgement against them in the market-place? Then let shoulder  
 22 of mine hang from shoulder-blade, every bone in my arm becalm! Nay,  
 23 but God's remors overwhelmed, his majesty overbore me.

24 In wealth did I put my trust, hid the bright gold in my life's pro-  
 25 vision; doted I upon my great riches, upon all my toil had reaped? When  
 26 I gazed on the sun in its splendour, on the moon in her royal por-  
 27 geon, did these things steal my heart away, so that month-blessed hand  
 28 is adoration? That were great wrong done, to deny the God who is higher  
 29 than all. Did I triumph over a fallen foe, rejoice at his ruin; lend my  
 30 lips to ill words, cursing my enemy's life away? Rather, it was of myself  
 31 men were fain to speak evil, men of my own household, and to their  
 32 hearts' content! Never had the stranger to lodge in the open, my doors  
 33 were open to every wayfarer that passed.

34 Men are frail; does sin lie on my conscience undisclosed, does the

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'For many grew up with me from my childhood, and came up at my mother's womb with me'; the aside may be that Job himself was always a married man, but the parenthesis is irrelevant. There is no mention of conceiv-  
 ing in the Hebrew text.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'If the sins of my servants did not vex, who will give us of his flesh, that we may be grieved?' This is usually interpreted, in various ways, as if 'his flesh' could mean 'the flesh of meat which he provides,' but this is very improbable. For 'taking a man's flesh' is the sense of troubling him, see verse above.

memory of guilt reside in my bosom? Was I deterred by fear of the multitude, of my neighbours' contemptuous looks? Did I hold my tongue,<sup>2</sup> and keep within doors? O that my cause might be tried; that he, the Almighty, would grant my request; that he, my Judge, would write my record down! Now generally I would hear it with me, shoulder-high, as wear it as a crown! I would proclaim it wherever I went, as for a king's robes to read. Can these lands of mine bear testimony against me, can its sheaf harvest tell a tale of harvests enjoyed, and no price paid for its sheaf, of labours cruelly wasted? Then thank the wheel, thank the barley may it yield me.

Ended herewith are the sayings of Job.

## CHAPTER 32

SO they assumed Job no more, three others, a man persuaded of his own innocence. But there was one who stood by in anger and thought scorn of them, Eliu the Buzite, son of Buzachai, of Buzai's kindred. Angry he was with Job, for claiming that God did him an injury, and thought scorn of those friends of his, that could find no reasonable answer, but were content to find Job a guilty man. Eliu, then, waited till Job had finished speaking; was he not younger than the rest? But when he found that the other three had no answer to give, he could contain himself no longer.

Thus, then, spoke Eliu the Buzite, son of Buzachai: Late in time was I born, and you are older men than I; with bowed head I keep my own counsel, ready to listen, while old age speaks, and learn from you the garnered wisdom of years. But I am now that man speaks by inspiration; only the breath of the most High can grant discernment; long life does not make men wise, it is not always the aged that give true award. So it is that I would first have you listen while I make known my thoughts to you. I have waited long on your words, heard you out, while you reached about for reasons, attentive enough, while I still hoped to learn the truth from you; but no, not one of you has convinced Job, or answered his tidings. Do not flatter yourselves that you have tracked to down the truth; God must put him down, not man.<sup>3</sup> Not against me has

<sup>2</sup> Literally, according to the Latin version, 'And did I not rather hold my tongue?' but this obscures the sense of the passage.

<sup>3</sup> The Latin version here gives what is perhaps the most coherent rendering of a sentence which presents much difficulty in the original.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'Lest perhaps you should say, "We have found wisdom; God has done, for out him (as the Hebrew said, well enough thing away)" It is not clear whether the wisdom is that of Job or his friends, nor whether the second half of the verse is part of their supposed opinion.

he draws up these pleadings of his; not with your thistles answer will I meet him.

- 11 What, all abstained, these wise men, no answer ready, the words driven  
a from their lips? I have had enough of waiting for them to speak, and  
a seeing them stand dumbly: I will take my turn at pleading, tell out my  
a thought. I am full of matter, in labour with ripe sentences; firm wine  
a that has no vent will burst even a new wine-skin. Speak I must, if I  
a would get relief, unburden my lips of their answer. Human respect shall  
a not deter me; how should I march away with God? Uncertain my span  
of days; what if he should call me suddenly to account, he, my Creator?

## CHAPTER 33

- 1 **L**ISTEN, then, Job, to my announcements, and hear me out; show my  
a speech free, tongue and throat are loosed; have he plain words,  
a unadorned in all history. A creature I; God's spirit made me, the breath  
a of sanctification made me to life; if answer thou hast, then come meet  
a me face-to-face, since God made us both, and we were fashioned of one  
a clay: how art thou wroth to dispute thus, so thrusts to overthrow thee.
- 2 Openly thou hast told, with my own ears I witness it, Innocent  
a though I be of all wrong, free from the stain of guilt, God has picked  
a a quarrel with me; that is the reason, and no other, why he treats me  
a as an enemy, holds me so close a prisoner, and watches me wherever  
a I go. But there is no reluctance in thy plea; I tell thee, man, cannot be  
a matched with God. What, wouldst thou complain that he does not meet  
a these charges of thine? Know, then, that God warns us once, but does  
a not repeat his warning.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes in visions of the night, when deep  
a sleep falls upon men as they lie abed, he speaks words of revelation, so  
a that thou shalt know they need. This is one means by which he will  
a turn a man away from his designs, purge him of his pride, and so the  
a grove is disappointed, the sacred minister its prey. Or else he will use the  
a pains of the sick-bed for a man's correction, and leave his whole frame  
wasted with disease.
- 3 Still days, when he sickness at the thought of food, of all the dainties  
a he once loved so well; when the flesh pines and the bones have sought  
a to cover them, when death swooneth on life, and the powers of darkness

<sup>1</sup> According to the Hebrew text, 'I cannot give further titles to man,' a phrase which is repeated in the next verse, where the Latin has 'I do not know how long I shall live.'

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text is usually interpreted as meaning, 'God treats us once and a second time (or, twice as in one of two ways) without our perceiving it.'

dant his spirit! Then it is an angel's<sup>1</sup> task, as many angels there be, to interpret his need, and show him where man's good lies; and the word of mercy will be spoken, Let be, the grave is not for him; I have feared the secret of his sinning;<sup>2</sup> enough, now, torment has racked him, let us him restore to the vigour of his youth! So, God's pardon would and now, as the sick man stands in his presence once more, all thankfulness, restored to favour. He turns to the bystanders and makes acknowledgement, as A sinner I, no doubt but I have greatly offended, my punishment was less than I deserved! Now God has relieved me from death's snare, I am as in the still, and see the light.

Such mercy, not once or twice, God shows to man, turning him from the grave, refunding the lamp of life for him. Listen to me, then, Job, and have me out, make answer to me, if answer thou canst, for I would as this we three accepted. If answer thou hast none, listen to me in silence as while I unfold the truth.<sup>3</sup>

## CHAPTER 34

AND Eliu speaks on: A word for the wise; listen, you that are the world's sages; for God, the discerning judge, for wisdom, the discerning ear. Answer me now, give, this way or that, of two ways we must choose the better. Eliu is Job telling us that he is innocent, that God denies him his rights, judges him falsely, and places him with punishment undeserved. Are there many such; many that think so greatly for the opportunity to err? See how far his conclusions fall for every sinner that would have an excuse for wrongdoing, when he complains that there is no pleasing God, however ready a man is to do his will.

Listen to me, then, discerning heart! From God, the Almighty, for is removed is all wickedness, is every thought of wrong; he treats men as only as they deserve, giving due reward to each. What, should Almighty God pervert justice by condemning the innocent? Is the case of the wide earth entrusted to some other; is not the ruler of the world himself the world's judge? He has but to turn his thought towards men, so shall

<sup>1</sup> The word used in the Hebrew text may also be rendered, 'a messenger's.'

<sup>2</sup> It is not certain here whether it is the angel that speaks, or God himself.

<sup>3</sup> vs. 27-33. Eliu does not, like the three friends, suggest Job of some special fault which has called down God's punishment upon him. He explains human suffering as sent by God not for vengeance but for correction. Only, since we are all sinners, we have to confess that our suffering was (occasionally) deserved.

- ing the spirit be once breathed into them, and all life would fill everywhere; mankind would return to its dust.
- 10 Is Job wise? Then let him listen to these words of mine, heed well my warning. Can there be healing,<sup>1</sup> where there is no love of right?
- 11 Wouldst thou find souls with him whose justice runs so deep? He it is that says: 'Traitor to a crowned king, and false princes themselves guilty of rebellion.' Nothing comes to him for royal dignity, nor takes the oppressor's part against the friendless; are not all alike his creatures? Suddenly dies the tyrant; there is strife and battle about the court, as they carry him off to be buried, and yet no hand laid on him. Still God's eye watches over man, whatever they do, wherever they take their path; darkness is none, though it were the shadow of death itself, that can hide the wrong-doer; not at a sign of his own choosing man meets God in judgment. A whole world of men he will destroy, and put others in their place; weary of their ill deeds, he bids darkness fall, and there is an end of them. In some place where many triumph at the sight, he bears down the rebels<sup>2</sup> that hitherto of set purpose defied him, redoubt nothing of his commandments, till at last the despairing cry of poor folk unbelieved is tracked to their door. So long as he grants prosperity, no crime there is none; it is when he frowns upon man or nation that no eye can meet him. Yet for a people's sin, he will appoint a false-hearted king to rule them.
- 12 Such is the sentence I give to God; now let us hear things: show me my error, and if thou canst prove that I have spoken again, I will speak no more. Perhaps thou thinkest it part of the punishment God sets of thee, hearing what it pains thee to hear? But it was thou, not I, won the first to speak. If thou hast better advice to offer, say on.<sup>3</sup>
- 13 O for wise tongues to speak, for discerning ears to listen! This Job has spoken as fools do, no word of his that echoes true doctrine! Fatter,<sup>4</sup> let Job be tried still, tried to the uttermost, have no pity on him with a man so perverse, that sets a crown on his sin by blasphemy! For a while, let us see all ways denied him; and let him see God in judgment if he will.

<sup>1</sup> Rather, according to the Hebrew text, 'governance'; Elihu's argument seems to be that right itself can have no other source than him who is the world's supreme Ruler.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'The wicked them as if they were wicked, in the dwelling-place of the pious, instead of them who are'; it is probable that the text here is corrupt.

<sup>3</sup> See Job 35. It is not easy to be certain what is the state of the Latin version here. The Hebrew text differs from it considerably; but the interpretations given of this are so forced and so various as to make it doubtful whether the text itself has been preserved.

<sup>4</sup> 'Fatter'; the Hebrew word so rendered in the Latin text also be interpreted, 'I would that . . .'

## CHAPTER 35

AND still Eli spoke on. What relevance is there in this censuring of a  
 thing, when thou claimest to have right on thy side against God? He  
 sees nothing (so runs thy complaint) for man's good deeds; they are of  
 no advantage to him, that he should care for sin of mind? Here is my  
 answer, to thee, Job, and to thy friends alike. Look heavenward, mark  
 how the skies tower above thee, and read thy lesson there. Multiply thy  
 wrong-doing as thou wilt, no sin of thine can harm or touch him; he  
 cannot be the less, no gift thou makest him, he is none the richer for thy  
 pains. Only to thy fellow men thy malice does a hurt; only Adam's chil-  
 dren profit by thy uprightness.

... Cries and groans there are in plenty when oppression abounds,  
 when tyranny holds unchallenged sway? Where is God? not idle yet never  
 did they seek to find him when he brought triumph in the hour of  
 distress, the God who teaches them such lessons as he never gave to a  
 beast or bird. Only then, only when the wicked lord is over them, men  
 cry out, but their cry goes unheard; should God concern himself with  
 these random complaints, he, the Almighty, would be their pleadings out  
 by cost? Nay, when he seems to take no heed, submit thyself to his judg-  
 ment and await his hour; thy present sufferings do not trouble his  
 anger, he is not taking vengeance to the full.

See, then, how all Job's utterance misses the mark; glib words with  
 no texture of knowledge!

## CHAPTER 36

AND still Eli would have his say. Hear with me a little while I  
 declare my thought to thee; I have more to say yet on God's  
 behalf. From a deep source I will draw my reasons, proving him, my  
 Master, to be just; here is no defensive digression, the full truth shall be  
 made known to thee. He, the all-powerful, does not grudge men power;  
 it is only to the wicked he denies his aid; the fraudulent shall have

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'For thou hast said, There (God) takes no pleasure in the right, or what advantage will it be to thee if I sin?'—it seems necessary to suppose that there is an allusion to the thought of the universe here. In the Hebrew text, Job is probably represented as asking how upright behaviour on his part could be of more advantage to God than if he should sin.

<sup>2</sup> As verse 9, there is such a sudden break to the argument of the chapter that it is difficult to believe the text has come down to us without mistakes.

1 rebuke. Never from the just is his favour withdrawn; a royal throne is  
2 theirs for ever, so high he exalts them. If he should leave them in chains,  
3 caught in the coils of vice and need, it is but to apprise them of their way, if  
4 he doth, their own tyrannous doing; he will speak home to them for their  
5 correction, warn them to turn back from their guilty ways. Hear they not  
6 heed, they shall live long in ease and recovery: if hear they will not, it  
7 is the sword's point for them, to their last grasp fixed still. It is the  
8 evening, the false-hearted, that are God's sworn enemies; from them he  
9 cry comes when the chains close about them; the storm sweeps them  
10 away, forgotten in death as the temple ruinous are forgotten.<sup>1</sup> It is the  
11 friendship he makes in their need, speaks home to them through the  
12 afflictions they endure. From the pit's mouth, where the ground seems  
13 lost under thy foot, he will bring thee out into full freedom; then shall  
14 thou sit at a table loaded with delicacies.

15 Is sentence passed on thee such as whels undergo? Thou shalt have  
16 justice yet, and a true reward. Never let the thought that God is angry  
17 lure thee into tyranny and corruption, lay aside thy greatness, behold  
18 to appease, away with the body-guard which attends thee; put an end to  
19 the dark time when restless men march under their orders. Do not  
20 yield to the rebellious mood thou hast cherished since affliction came  
21 upon thee.<sup>2</sup>

22 God, that is so great and powerful, man's sovereign teacher, how  
23 should anyone fathom his designs, or charge him with injustice? Reck  
24 thou, how high beyond thy thought are those counsels of his which men  
25 prize; how mortal see, but see, like mortals, from afar. Truly there  
26 is no measuring God's greatness, no reckoning his length of days. He  
27 boards up the rain-clouds, or shrouds them down in full flood from the  
28 cloud-fountain that curdles in overhead. With those clouds, where it is  
29 his pleasure, he spreads his pavilion, flashes his lightning on high, brings  
30 darkness on the depths of the sea. Has he not a whole world to rule,  
31 a whole race of mortals to supply with food? Now he hides the light  
32 away with the shadow of his hand, now he bids it shine out again, as if  
33 to show a friend at his side that he is the owner of it, that he can reach  
34 his high fastness when he will.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>It is doubtful whether the second half of this verse has been correctly translated to us. If it has, the enemies of God are perhaps compared to the impregnable cities of heathen worship or persons unlikely to forget any gathering.

<sup>2</sup>vs. 28-32. Throughout this passage, both the Hebrew text and the Latin version are hopelessly obscure.

<sup>3</sup>vs. 33-35. While the general sense of these verses can be roughly inferred, the expressions used are very confusing, and it is probable that the passage has suffered from errors in transmission.



## CHAPTER 37

WHAT wonder if my heart trembles and fails me at the thought? Listen to the blast of it, the voice that speaks amid such tremors, the deepest secrets of that utterance! Under what part of heaven, into what corner of earth does he not look, do not his lightningsgrazes? Then what a costly account, the magnificent goal of his thunder; a voice heard, and none can tell whence it comes! God's voice in the thunder, a marvel worthy of him, whose deeds are so great and so unsearchable.

He it is that bids the snows fall over earth, and winter sleep, and his fierce storms of rain. No land of man has it shut up close now under his wings: covers the heart in its lair, or lulls in its cove. From his treasure-house in the cold north tempest comes and cold. At God's breath the frost black flut, all he bids the waters flow again in plenty. And now the crops must have rain, far and wide the clouds scatter their rays of hope; this way and that they run at the guidance of his will, to do their appointed task on earth, among distant tribes, or here in his own land, let his mercy bid them appear where it may.

Manner enough, Job, for thy handling! Hark where thou standest, and consider the marvellous acts of God. Canst thou tell us when it was as God bade the rain bring hope to us from those clouds of his, tell us the course of their journeyings? In thy knowledge so perfect? See if thy payments do not ding woe about thee when the north wind clears the earth! And was it with help of thine God fashioned the heavens, firm as we can know? Tell us, what watch we shall see to him, we, that up he is our darkness! What messenger shall deliver my complaint to him, a so human messenger that will bring on himself only ruin?

Light fails men's eyes; all of a sudden, the air is thick with clouds; as then a breath of passing wind has driven them away! As well watch for the treasures of the earth, as for the majestic power which is God's due; find speech worthy of it we cannot, so great he is in strength, so so potent in counsel, so faithful in right dealing, past all that tongue can tell. Well may men fear him; none that think themselves who but will be unable to meet his look.

\* According to the Hebrew text, this verse should begin, 'He bids the clouds with assurance.' 'Their rays of hope's liberality, 'their brightness,' which is usually interpreted of the lightning, but the allusion seems out of place here, and also to wear its bloom.

## CHAPTER 38

**T**HEN, from the midst of a whirlwind, the Lord gave Job his answer:  
 1 Here is how that man ever he doubting the truth of things with words  
 2 if considered? Strip, then, and enter the land; it is my turn to ask  
 3 questions now, thou to answer them. From what vantage-point wast  
 4 thou watching, when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell me, whence  
 5 comes this sure knowledge of things? Tell me, since thou art so wise,  
 6 was it thou as I designed earth's plan, measuring it out with the line? How  
 7 came it, how so much as thou, who laid its corner-stones? To me, that day,  
 8 all the morning stars sang together, all the powers of heaven uttered their  
 9 joyful praises. Was it thou or I that lay the sea behind bars? No sooner  
 10 had it broken forth from the womb than I dressed it in overlapping-  
 11 clothes of dark mine, set it within bounds of my own choosing, made  
 12 it fast with lock and bar. Thus for thou shalt come, said I, and no farther;  
 13 here let thy swelling waves spend their force.  
 14 Dost thou, a mortal, take counsel of the day's breaking, and thou  
 15 the dawn its appointed post, snatching away earth's reveries, tearing  
 16 away the ill-done? The dawn, that stamps its image on the day of earth,  
 17 stands there, draped over it like a garment,<sup>1</sup> taking away from the ill-done  
 18 the darkness that is their light, so that all their power goes for nothing.  
 19 Didst thou ever make thy way into the sea's depths, walk as thy way  
 20 through its hidden currents? When did the gates of death open to thee,  
 21 and give thee sight of its gloomy threshold? Nay, hast thou viewed the  
 22 whole surface of earth itself? Tell me, if such knowledge is thine, all  
 23 its secrets; where the light dwells, where darkness hides its haunts: hast  
 24 thou followed either of these to the end of its journey, tracked it to its  
 25 end? Didst thou fence the time of thy own birth, reckon thou fenced  
 26 the years of life that lay before thee?  
 27 Hast thou found thy way in to see the chambers where snow and  
 28 hail lie stored, my treasury against the time of storm, when there are  
 29 wars to be fought, battles to be won? Tell me by what means the light  
 30 is withered over earth, the heat diffused: tell me what power carved  
 31 out a channel for the impetuous rain, a vent for the echoing thunder-  
 32 storm, that they should fall on some lonely desert where foot of man  
 33 or beast trod, water those trackless wastes, and make the green grass  
 34 to spring? What sire guarded the rain, or the drops of dew; what mother's

<sup>1</sup> The grammar of the Hebrew text is obscure; it may, literally, "It comes about as day (ill?) the silver-dress they stand like a garment."

<sup>2</sup> The sense of the Hebrew text is rather, "What thou know so long ago, are thy years so many, that thou hast knowledge of all this?"

work from the ice, the frost that comes from heaven to make water hard to us men, improve the depths beneath its surface?

Is it as day continued the glimmering bright? Perhaps darkness to close, and is Orion's circle spreads so wide? Does this tell the day-star when to shine it out, the evening star when to rise over the sun of morn? Is it thou to understand the motions of the seasons, and rule earth by their influence? Can thy voice reach the clouds, and bid their showers fall as thou; canst thou send out lightnings that will do thy errand, and come back to wait thy pleasure? What power gives order man's heart its precedence, or the hawk its sure instinct? knowest all the motions of heaven, and tellest the number of the spheres? When was it that earth's dust was piled, and the solid ground was built up?

Is it thou or I that feed the lioness her prey, to satisfy those hungry or whelps of hers, where they lie in rocky caves, their lapping-plumet as Whisk of us feeds the sword? Is it not to God their workings try so earthly, countless for want of food?

## CHAPTER 39

NOT thou know when the wild goats give birth on their high crags, to watch the kids in their claves, count the months while they carry their young, and know the time of their delivery. Without thy aid they travel; born of those pangs, the calves are soon weaned, and make for the pasture, go out to seek no more. Who gives the wild his unfettered liberty to roam the wilderness, and make the salt plain his dwelling-place; to spare the din of cities, no dinest crying after him, and look about him at the slopes where he feeds, all that goats would his pasturage? Canst thou tempt the wild out to thy service, food him at thy wall, bind him to the plough with thongs and lead him out to break clods in the valley? Wouldest thou trust that goat strength of his to do the work for thee, bring in thy harvest and fill thy threshing-floor?

Here is the ostrich, of one feather with horses and hark, yet she will leave her eggs on the bare earth and canst thou give warmth to the dust

<sup>1</sup> The constellations mentioned cannot be identified with certainty.

<sup>2</sup> The two words represented here by "heart" and "eye" are variously interpreted by Hebrew scholars.

<sup>3</sup> In the Hebrew text, "Who is wise enough to count the stars, or can lay down the watersides of heaven?"

<sup>4</sup> Literally, in the Latin version "elephant" here, and elsewhere "unicorn." The word occurs frequently in Scripture, but the exact meaning of it remains in dispute.

17 as hands than?<sup>23</sup> Howlless, though feet of men should trample or wild  
 18 beasts devour them, she makes herself to play as if the load was none of  
 19 her; throws away all her hopes in careless alarm. God's will it was to  
 20 close her season, wisdom she might have none, though she were swift,  
 21 we need, to hold her wings aloft, mocking the pains of home and ride.  
 22 Ay, and what of the horse? Is it of thy gift his great strength comes,  
 23 was it thou didst organize him with terror?<sup>24</sup> Then wilt not scare him  
 24 away like a locust; surely he breathes, deeply he paws the ground,  
 25 bravely he possums, as he goes out to meet the shock of battle. Fear  
 26 quakes down him, but the sword drive him back; clang-quick, he stoils  
 27 and upsur daubs as they may, he swallows up the intervening distance,  
 28 all heat and rage. Little reck he of the trumpet's blast; echoes rudely  
 29 the bugle's note, while he scours from afar the combat, hears the shouting  
 30 of captives, and the din of arms.  
 31 Is it of thy devising the hawk grows full-fledged, in time to spread her  
 32 wings for the southward journey? Is it at thy bidding the eagle soars,  
 33 to make her eyrie in the heights, cave and crag and inaccessible rock her  
 34 familiar haire, whence her far-seeing eyes look round, searching for  
 35 prey? Blood-thirsty has beak, and where she carcases waits, waits she.  
 36 All this the Lord said to Job, and added besides. Here is one that  
 37 brought a charge against God rarely put down! Nay, God then didst  
 38 challenge, God thou must refuse. And thus Job made the Lord answer:  
 39 So vain a pleader, I have no suit to make, hush on! If I will listen.  
 40 Once and again I have spoken the word I would fain say; now I  
 41 dare not.<sup>25</sup>

## CHAPTER 40

1 **A**ND once more, from the midst of a whirlwind, the Lord gave Job  
 2 this answer: Strip, then, and enter the list; it is my turn to ask  
 3 questions, thine to impart knowledge. My rewards thou wastidst this  
 4 covering; wouldst prove me unjust, to prove thyself innocent; why then,  
 5 let us see thee show strength like the strength of God, let us hear thee  
 6 thunder as God thunders. Come, deck thyself with glory, up with thee to  
 7 the heights; show all thy splendour, robe thyself in dawning array!  
 8 Scatter the proud in that indignation of thine, with thy frown show the  
 9 tyrant; here is no oppressor for thee to fear; here is one that defies

<sup>23</sup> *vs. 13, 15.* The Latin text does not tally with the Hebrew text, the sense of which is by no means certain.

<sup>24</sup> Literally, 'clothe his neck with weightings (or perhaps, with thunder).'

<sup>25</sup> *vs. 30-32.* In the Hebrew text, these are marked as the last five verses of chapter 40.

these, crush him! Bury them in the dust, one and all, hide them from sight, deep in the abyss: then I will acknowledge thee for evermore, one strength can bring him slavery.

There is Behemoth,<sup>1</sup> my creature as thou art, fed as the same grass the ox can eat: yet what strength in his limbs, what lusthood in the surge of his belly! Stiff as cedar-wood his tail, sleek-lim'd the sinews of his groin, bones like pipes of brass, gristle like plates of steel! None of God's works can vie with him, no weapons to bring to the hands of his maker? Whole mountain-sides, the playground of his fellow beasts, he will lay under tribute;<sup>2</sup> as he lies there under the clear covert, of the marsh-reefs, thick boughs for his shadow, among the willows by the stream. The flooded river he drinks unmannered; fishes (his) mould, he have no terrors for that gaping mouth. Like a lion it would charm his eye, though it should pierce his nostrils with sharp snakes.<sup>3</sup>

Or Leviathan, wilt thou find a bait that will draw him to land, a lure to that will hold his raptur'd throat? Canst thou ring him, or pass a chain through his jaw? Will he impotence thee with amusements, or quick thee to wild maddenciness, all thou maketh a covenant that binds him to be to thy servant for ever? Will thou turn him like a tame bird, chain him as up to make sport for the maid-servant? Is he to be divided up among a fellow fishermen, sold piece-meal to the merchants? Is that skin a spoil to the net, that head for the fisherman's bait? Do but try conclusions with him, and see if the memory of the combat does not keep thee dumb! Foul hope, that must be dashed to the ground for all to see, is

## CHAPTER 41

**I**T is in mercy that I forbear to make him a plague for mankind. But indeed, there is no resisting me, nor can my anger my thanks by a lending me the aid I bestow; nothing on earth but is at my disposal. I

<sup>1</sup> Behemoth is usually identified with the hippopotamus, sometimes with the elephant; Leviathan with the crocodile, sometimes with the whale. Our text may be allegorical representations of the hostile powers exercised by the Gogites.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'He is the beginning of the works of God; he who made him will bring near his enemy,' a phrase variously interpreted by commentators.

<sup>3</sup> The Latin version represents the crocodile as giving Behemoth grass, but the word used in the Hebrew was never produce of any kind, and it seems probable, in view of what follows, that crocodile excreta are referred to.

<sup>4</sup> This version is the best way of striking the Latin, exactly the same expression is used in Job 40.17, and the same forms the natural subject of the sentence. The Hebrew text runs: 'By his eyes he captures him, by sinews he plucks his enemy'; and the words are constantly taken, and without hesitation, as alluding to the crocodile, or perhaps the sea, with which the animal is caught.

give him no quarter, for all his bountiful, all his flattering words.<sup>1</sup>

1 Who can strip the skin of him, who can penetrate him the centre of  
2 his mouth, shoving the gates that guard it, the secret of his mind? The  
3 body of him is like shield of cast metal, scale pressing on scale, so close  
4 to one another as to leave no rent between; so well joined that nothing  
5 will part them. Let him but sense, the few flashes only let him open his  
6 eyes, it is like the glimmer of dawn; flames come from his jaws, bright  
7 as a burning torch, smoke from his nostrils, thick as the fumes of a  
8 smoking pot; his very breath will set such affairs, such fire issues from  
9 that mouth. What strength dwells in that neck of his, what secret play  
10 about him? Flare-out are the folds of his limbs, swirling through a  
11 thunder-bolt should strike them;<sup>2</sup> flame-out, too, is the heart of him,  
12 firm as ever stone was, as smith's anvil. Rises he up, angels themselves  
13 are afraid, and take sanctuary in their dread.<sup>3</sup> Sword-thrust, nor spear,  
14 nor breast-plate can hold their own against him, to him, steel is but  
15 as shell, bronze but timber-wood, nor fume be the arrow; sling-stones he  
16 means as straw, as scarce the hammer-blow, laughs at the broadsword  
17 as spear. Sunlight flashes beneath him as he goes, a path of gold through  
18 the air;<sup>4</sup> he makes the deep sea boil like a pot where elements sim-  
19 mer; how it shines in his wake, as though some itself had grown heavy  
20 with age!

21 He has met his like among the strong things of earth, that fearless  
22 to capture, that heaven-confronting eye. Over all the pride of earth he reigns  
23 supreme.

## CHAPTER 42

2 **AND** thus Job answered the Lord: I acknowledge it, thou canst do  
3 All thou wilt, and no thought is too difficult for thee. Here indeed  
4 is one that clouds over the truth with his ignorance! I have spoken as fools

<sup>1</sup> ps. 7-9. The Latin version here differs widely from the Hebrew text, which here gives a questionable sense. If we follow the Latin it seems impossible to suppose that any creature in the natural order, such as the crocodile, is overtopped. But indeed there are many allusions in this chapter which cannot, without considerable ingenuity, be referred to the crocodile.

<sup>2</sup> There is no reference to a thunderbolt in the Hebrew text.

<sup>3</sup> 'Take sanctuary'; literally, in the Latin version, 'pursue themselves.' The Hebrew word used is commonly interpreted as meaning 'are bewitched' in this context; and the Hebrew word rendered 'angels' perhaps only means 'winged beings.'

<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew text is different here, and apparently compares the scales of Luridians to pyramids.

speech, of things far beyond my ken. Hiccupeth it is my turn to speak, & 4  
 chide to Suez; my turn to ask questions, chide to impart knowledge! I >  
 have heard thy voice afar; nay, more, I have had sight of thee; now I am &  
 all reverse, I do penance in dust and ashes.<sup>1</sup>

And now, his converse with Job finished, the Lord said to Eliphaz :  
 the Thamsarite, Thou hast earned my displeasure, thou and those two  
 friends of thine, by speaking anins of me as my servant Job never did. To >  
 Job you must go for your ransoming, with seven bulks and seven rams, to  
 offer in burnt-sacrifice; he, my servants, shall intercede for you, and for  
 his sake your folly shall be pardoned, that speak anins of me when he  
 spoke the truth.

So away they went, Eliphaz the Thamsarite, Beldad the Shuhite, and >  
 Sophar the Naamathite, and did the Lord's bidding. For Job's sake the  
 Lord pardoned them; and, as he prayed for those friends of his, the Lord >  
 returned in the night of his penances. So he gave back to Job twice over  
 all that he had lost. Camels and camelmenn and all his old acquaint- >  
 ances gathered about him now, and sat down as guests in his house, and  
 made great ado bemoaning all the afflictions the Lord had sent him;  
 not one of them but gave him presents, a sheep and a gold ear-ring  
 apiece. A richer man the Lord made Job now than ever he had been in >  
 all days; fourteen thousand sheep he had, and six thousand camels, and  
 a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand donkeys. Seven sons he had, >  
 and three daughters, the first he called Fair as the Day, and the second as  
 Sweet as Cloak, and the third Dark Eye-lids.<sup>2</sup> Workmen might women >  
 be found fair as Job's daughters, and each had the same patrimony as  
 her brothers.

Job himself lived on for a hundred and forty years, to see sons and >  
 grandsons and a new generation yet of his descendants; so he died at last  
 an old man like, that have taken their full toll of the years.

<sup>1</sup> The rest of this passage is not above suspicion. Neither the beginning  
 of verse 5 nor the end of verse 4 can be said to suit Job's own position; even  
 if we regard them as speeches Job has from 31.3 and the other from 40.2  
 they have no obvious relation to the context. Nor is the sense of the context  
 in verse 5 for any reason clear.

<sup>2</sup> 'Dark Eye-lids', literally 'For of Antimony,' which was used as a cosmetic.

## THE BOOK OF PSALMS\*

### PSALM 1

**B**LESSED is the man who does not guide his steps by ill counsel,  
nor lingers where sinners walk, or, where corrupt souls<sup>1</sup> gather, sit  
down to rest: the man whose heart is set on the law of the Lord, on that  
live, day and night, his thoughts will dwell. He stands firm as a tree  
planted by running water, ready to yield its fruit when the season comes,  
and never standing in leaf: all that he does will prosper. Not such, ye  
men the wicked, the wicked are like chaff, swept away by a wind from the  
face of the earth. Not for the wicked, when judgment comes, to rise up  
and plead their cause; sinners will have no part in the reunion of the  
just. They walk, the just, under the eye of the Lord's favour; the path  
of the wicked, how soon is it lost to sight!

### PSALM 2

**W**HAT means this tumult among the nations? Why do the peoples  
cherish vain dreams? See how the kings of the earth stand in array,  
how its rulers make common cause, against the Lord, and against the  
King he has anointed, crying, Let us break away from their bondage,  
let us throw off their yoke! He who dwells in heaven is laughing at  
their threats, the Lord makes light of them; and at last, in his displeasure,  
he will speak out; his fierce anger will lead them into confusion. To us,  
he has given a lofty throne upon mount Zion, his sanctuary;<sup>2</sup> there we  
pronounce his edict. Now he tells me, There set my son, I have begotten  
a son this day. Ask thy will of me, and thou shalt have the nations for thy  
patrimony, the very ends of the world for thy domain. Then shall he lead  
them like sheep<sup>3</sup> with a crook of iron, break them in pieces like earthen-  
ware. Princes, take warning; learn your lesson, you that rule the world.  
Tremble, and serve the Lord, rejoicing in his promise, but with awe

\*A new Latin translation of the Hebrew text, published by the Pontifical Biblical Institute, was approved by Pope Pius XII in 1941. An English rendering of this is given in the Appendix to this volume.

<sup>1</sup> Literally 'gentiles'; the Greek has 'gentile nations,' the Hebrew text 'scoundrels.'

<sup>2</sup> Another version of the Hebrew text makes God the speaker here. 'I have anointed for perhaps, anointed my king upon the hill of Zion, my sanctuary.'

<sup>3</sup> 'Lead them like sheep'; or, according to another reading, 'slaughter them.'



in your hearts. Kiss the rod;<sup>1</sup> do not hate the Lord's stripes, and go away from the east path. When the fire of his vengeance blazes out is suddenly, happy are they who find their refuge in him.

## PSALM 3

(A psalm David wrote, when he fled before his son Absalom.)

**S**EE how they surround me, Lord, my adversaries, how many rise up: <sup>1</sup>  
 sinners against me; everywhere voices meeting me, His God catches <sup>2</sup>  
 me like a net. Yet, Lord, thou art the shield that covers me, thou art the <sup>3</sup>  
 psalm that keeps my head erect. I have trust to cry out to the Lord, and my <sup>4</sup>  
 voice reaches his exalted sanctuary, and there finds hearing. Safe in <sup>5</sup>  
 God's hand I lay down, and sleep, and have no fear; and now, though <sup>6</sup>  
 thousands of the people are upon me from every side, I will not be afraid <sup>7</sup>  
 of them. Be still, myself, Lord; my God, save me; thine to judge down the <sup>8</sup>  
 face that unjustly assail me;<sup>9</sup> thine to break the fangs of malice. From <sup>9</sup>  
 the Lord all deliverance comes; thy benediction, Lord, runs upon thy <sup>10</sup>  
 people.

## PSALM 4

(To the end among the songs; a psalm of David).<sup>1</sup>

**W**HEN I call on his name, God listens to me and grants redress: <sup>1</sup>  
 will, in days of trouble, thou hast brought me relief; have pity on <sup>2</sup>  
 me now, and hear my prayer. Great ones of the world, will your hearts <sup>3</sup>  
 always be hardened,<sup>4</sup> will you never cease setting your heart on shadows, <sup>4</sup>  
 following a lie? To the rock he loves, the Lord shows woodcress favour; <sup>5</sup>  
 whenever I call on his name, the Lord will hear me. Do not let anger <sup>6</sup>  
 hurry you into sin;<sup>7</sup> be softened, when you lie down to rest, of the <sup>7</sup>  
 thoughts that were in your hearts. Offer sacrifices with due observance, <sup>8</sup>  
 and put your trust in the Lord. There are many that languish for a sight <sup>9</sup>  
 of better times, but already, Lord, the sun of thy favour shines and clear <sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The word given in the Hebrew text should mean either "justice," or "the Lord."

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text has, "listen to the dreams of all who assail me."

<sup>3</sup> This is a rendering of the Latin; but all these verbs prefixed to various persons are very obscure, and there is little agreement about their meaning except that they refer to the spiritual and temporal world.

<sup>4</sup> Our Hebrew text has, "Will my heart always be turned into ashes?"

<sup>5</sup> Literally, "Be angry, and do not sin." Some would render "be frightened because of 'be angry.'"

- 1 above me, thou hast made me glad at least, like men who are enriched,<sup>1</sup>  
 2 by the yield of their corn, and wine, and oil. In peace and bloodiness  
 3 I will sleep and take my rest;<sup>2</sup> thou, Lord, hast bidden me repose in confidence unpersecuted.

## PSALM 3

(To the end; for the halve; a psalm of David.)

- 1 LORD, listen to my plea, let me not sigh in vain; pay heed to my  
 2 cry of petition, my King, my God. To thee, Lord, my prayer goes  
 3 up, early to win thy audience; early in the morning I present myself  
 4 before thee and watch. No evil thing daunts thy Divine aspect; with thee  
 5 business cannot dwell; nor rebellion hold its ground at thy coming. Thou  
 6 lovest the wrap-doe, and wilt bring the liar to destruction; blood-  
 7 thirsty and treacherous men the Lord holds in abhorrence. I, then, com-  
 8 passioned by thy mercy, will break myself to thy house, and in reverence  
 9 of thee bow down before thy sanctuary.  
 10 Lord, do thou lead me with faithful care; guide me lovingly, where  
 11 I walk;<sup>3</sup> bear by examples. In their speech no truth can be found; their  
 12 hearts are compasses, their mouths gaping wounds; flattery is ever on  
 13 their lips. Thy sentence, O God! clear them of their hopes, cast them out  
 14 in all their wickedness; Lord, have they not defiled thee? But for all those  
 15 who trust in thee there is joy and everlasting triumph; thou wilt dwell  
 16 among them; all true lovers of thy name will boast of thee, who give  
 thy benediction to the just. Lord, thou dost shew thy loving-kindness  
 about us like a shield.

## PSALM 6

(To the end among the songs; a psalm of David; for the octave.)

- 1 LORD, when thou dost reproach me, let it not be in anger; when thou  
 2 dost chastise me, let it not be in displeasure. Lord, pity me; I have  
 3 no strength left; Lord, heal me; my limbs tremble; my spirits are

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'They have been enriched'; but the sense given may be inferred from the Hebrew.

<sup>2</sup> Others would render, 'I will both sleep and take my rest in peace; thou only, Lord, hast bidden me repose in confidence.' But the Latin interpretation, which the version well, if we accept the common opinion that this psalm, like the nine before, refers to the deliverance of Abraham's people.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'direct my way in thy sight.' The Hebrew text has 'show thy way to my sight.'

altogether broken; Lord, with them never be content! Lord, turn back, 1  
and grant a wretched soul relief, as thou art ever merciful, save me.  
When death comes, there is no more remembering thee; none can praise 2  
thee in the world beneath. I am wearied out with sighings every night;  
I lie weeping on my bed, till the tears drench my pillow. Grief has 3  
dimmed my eyes, and made an old man of me, so many are the adver-  
saries that surround me. Depose from me, all ye that traffic in iniquity, 4  
the Lord has heard my cry of distress. O prayer divinely heard, O boon 5  
divinely granted! All my enemies will be abashed and confounded; taken 6  
aback, all in a moment, and put to shame.

## PSALM 7

(A psalm of David; one which he sang to the Lord near the wells of Gath, for Bekeaiim.)

**O** LORD my God, my confidence is in thee; save me from all my 1  
persecutors, and grant me deliverance: must I fall a helpless prey to 2  
the foe, with none to rescue me, none to bring me off? O Lord my 3  
God, if I too have been at fault, if these hands are stained with guilt; if 4  
I have wronged myself as the man who wronged me, then indeed let me 5  
go away from my adversary's presence empty-handed;<sup>1</sup> it is all I have 6  
deserved. Then indeed let some enemy overtake me with his reproaches 7  
and punish, trample me to earth, and level my pride with the dust. Lord, 8  
rise up in thy anger, make thyself feared in the lands of my enemies;  
beard thyself, O Lord my God, in defence of the laws thou thyself hast 9  
given us. All the nations will gather about thee, if thou wilt come back 10  
to thy throne and rule them, the Lord judging the nations! Give me 11  
redress, Lord, in my uprightness, in all the iniquities that clutch me.  
Surely thou wilt put an end to the wrong-doing of the wicked, and 12  
proper the haughty, so thought or desire of ours can escape thy Divine 13  
surgery.

From the Lord, refuge of true hearts, my *waiting*<sup>2</sup> protection 14  
comes. How just a Judge God is, how strong, how patient<sup>3</sup> and must be 15

<sup>1</sup> Others would make the Hebrew, 'Thus I have wronged the man who was at peace with me, that I have wrongfully deposited my adversary's or, 'Thus I have wronged the man who was at peace with me, (say, I have been at peace or rectified those who wrongfully attacked me.) In either case, the sentence will sleep, not with a conscience, not with a full stop.

<sup>2</sup> Literally 'wait'; some think the word belongs to verse 10 and agrees with 'God.'

<sup>3</sup> The words 'strong' and 'patient' are not in the Hebrew text. The Latin has, in the second half of the verse, 'Is thou indignant every day?', the Greek, 'God is not indignant every day,' the Hebrew, 'God is indignant every day.'

15 he daily provoked to anger? If you do not repent, his sword will flash  
 16 higher; he has bent his bow in readiness, and ready are the weapons  
 17 he has fixed to it; he has barbed his arrows with fire. There was a heart  
 pregnant with malice, that conceived only spite, and gave birth only to  
 18 shame! There was one who dug a pit and sank it deep, and fell into a  
 19 mine of his own setting! All his spite will recoil on himself, all his violence  
 20 will fall on his own head. I will ever thank the Lord for his just retribu-  
 tion, singing praises to the name of the Lord, the most High.

## PSALM 8

(To the end; for the virginpsalm; a psalm of David.)

1 O LORD, our Master, how the majesty of thy name fills all the  
 2 earth! Thy greatness is high above heavens itself. Thou hast made  
 the life of children, of infants at the breast,<sup>1</sup> vocal with praise, unconquered  
 3 thy enemies to silence malicious and arrogant tongues. I look up at  
 4 these heavens of skies, the work of thy hands, at the moon and the stars,  
 5 which thou hast set in their places: what is man that thou shouldst  
 remember him? What is Adam's breed, that it should claim thy care?  
 6 Thou hast placed him only a little below the angels,<sup>2</sup> crowning him with  
 7 glory and honour, and bidding him rule over the works of thy hands.  
 8 Thou hast put them all under his dominion, the sheep and the cattle,  
 9 and the wild beasts besides; the birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea,  
 10 that tread by the sea's path. O Lord, our Master, how the majesty of  
 thy name fills all the earth!

## PSALM 9

(To the end; for the son's requital; a psalm of David.)

1 LORD, I give thee all the thoughts of my heart, recounting thy won-  
 2 derful doings: glad and triumphant in thee, I will sing praises to  
 3 thy name, O God most high. See how my enemies turn back, how they  
 4 fail and melt away at the sight of thee! Thou hast given me renown  
 and maintained my cause; thou art there on thy throne, seeing justice

<sup>1</sup> 'Infants,' that is, according to the Latin; the Hebrew word has rather the sense of disappointedness, frustration (cf. verse 16).

<sup>2</sup> Some would interpret the Hebrew here, 'thou hast founded strength through the lips of children and infants at the breast.'

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew can also be translated 'before God.'

done. Thou hast checked the heathen in their course; thou hast brought  
the wicked to nothing, blotting out their name endlessly, for all time.  
The records of the enemy have lost their edge for ever; thou hast rooted  
up their cities, and the memory of them died with the death of their  
sins.<sup>1</sup> But the Lord abides for ever on the throne of judgement: he has  
prepared, still judging the world rightly, still awarding each people  
its due: the Lord is a stronghold to the oppressed, a refuge in time of  
peril. Those who acknowledge thy name, Lord, can trust in thee; never  
was man forsaken that had recourse to thee.

Sing, then, to the Lord, who dwells in Zion, till the Gentiles of his  
love; how he, the saviour of blood, cares for the afflicted, does not forget  
them when they cry to him. Have pity on me, Lord, look upon all that  
I suffer at my enemies' hands; thou who didst ever rescue me from the  
gate of death, to proclaim thy power at the gate of thy loved Zion, to  
usult in thy saving power. The heathen have been caught in their own  
deadly devices; their feet have been trapped in the very toils they had  
laid; now it will be seen how the Lord defends the right, how the wicked  
convince their own undoing. To the place of death the wicked must  
return, heathens that have no thought of God. He does not forget the  
helpless; their time will come; the patience of the afflicted will not go  
for nothing. Beside thyself, Lord, let not human strength prevail; let the  
heathen stand upon their trial before thee; let the heathen, too, have a  
law-giver;<sup>2</sup> to teach them that duty and not man.

(Here, in the Hebrew text, Psalm 10 begins.)

Lord,<sup>3</sup> why dost thou stand far off? In days of peril and affliction, why  
dost thou make no sign? The heart of the oppressed burns within them, as  
so triumphant is the schemer that has entrapped them; so proud of his  
wicked end achieved, so well content with his knavery.<sup>4</sup> What wonder is  
if the sinner defies the Lord, thinking, for all his anger,<sup>5</sup> he will never

<sup>1</sup> The Latin here differs from the Hebrew text, which has no reference to records, as to a note of ruin.

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text has 'bring sorrow upon them' instead of 'appoint a law-giver over them.'

<sup>3</sup> The numbering of the Psalms here corresponds with that of the Vulgate. In the Hebrew text, which is followed by some modern revisions, verses 22-36 of this Psalm are treated as a separate psalm and numbered 10; while Psalms 146 and 147 are given as one psalm. Thus the Vulgate numbers 22 to 147 correspond to 11-147 of the alternative reckoning.

<sup>4</sup> The meaning here is very obvious: it is not clear whether the wicked themselves are entrapped by their own guile, or seeing their victims by guile, whether the sinner congratulates himself, or malicious congratulation flows others.

<sup>5</sup> 'For all his anger'; according to the Hebrew text 'in his [the sinner's] conscience.'

to make strict enquiry? A Jew, that has no thought of God, a life ever  
 21 stained with crime, eyes that are blind to thy judgements; and still he has  
 22 the mastery of his craft! Hadless time, he thinks, cannot shake his  
 23 untroubled conscience. His mouth overflows with curses, and calumny,  
 24 and devising his tongue is a store-house of misery and shame. He will  
 25 agree with the rich<sup>1</sup> to lie in wait in dark corners, and kill the man who  
 26 never wronged him; his eyes are continually on his prey; like a lion in  
 27 his lair, he watches from his hiding-place, to surprise his defenceless foe,  
 28 safe in the net. So he catches him in the toils and see how he bows  
 29 and scrapes,<sup>2</sup> now that he is master of his prey! Why wilt he think to  
 himself, God has forgotten about it; God will turn his face away, and see  
 nothing.

30 O Lord God, bestir thyself, lift up thy hand; do not forget the  
 31 helpless. Why is the sinner allowed to defy God, to think he will never  
 32 make enquiry? But in truth thou seest it; thou hast eyes for the misery  
 and shame; thou wilt give them up to vengeance.<sup>3</sup> The destitute are cast  
 33 on no man but thee; to thee only the orphan looks for redress. Break  
 down the power of the wicked oppressor, 'ill men loath' for a sign of his  
 34 wickedness, and look to vain. The Lord will reign for ever and ever,  
 35 while you, the heathen, will vanish from the land he loves. The sighing  
 of the defenceless has found audience; thou dost listen to the prayer of  
 36 the well ordered heart. *But* give redress to the fatherless and the poor;  
 mortal men shall make himself feared no longer.

## PSALM 10

(11)

(To the end, a psalm of David.)

1 **M**Y trust is in the Lord; how is it that you say to your friend, Scapa,  
 2 like a highland sparrow, to the hill-side? Scapa; the robbers  
 have strong their bows, have arrows ready in the quiver, to shoot from  
 3 their hiding-places at an unoffending heart; they have thrown down all  
 4 their hidden faults; what hope, now, for the just man? Yes, but the Lord  
 is in his holy shrine, the same Lord whose throne is in heaven, whose

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text has 'to the villages.'<sup>2</sup> v. 30. This phrase the most natural way of taking a much-disputed sentence. It is not clear whether the wicked man does this before God, or before his rich oppressors.<sup>3</sup> Or perhaps 'thou wilt take them (the misery and shame) into thy keeping.'<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew has 'Thou wilt look;' that is, make enquiry, as in verses 29 and 34 above, but it is hard to think that there is any natural sense of what follows, 'thou wilt not look.'

eye looks on the helpless, whose glance scratches the deeds of men, innocent or sinful, he reads every heart, and the friends of wrong-doing are the enemies of their own souls.<sup>1</sup> He will rain down sudden destruction on sinners; lies, and blasphemy, and stony wit, such is the draught he brews for them. The Lord is just, and just are the deeds he loves; who deals uprightly, deserves the favour of his smile.<sup>2</sup>

## PSALM 11

(12)

(To the melody for the octave, a psalm of David.)

**L**ORD, name to my rescue, piety is dead; in a base world, true hearts have grown rare. None but exchanges empty forms of speech with his neighbour; everywhere false hearts and their treacherous lips. Those treacherous lips, that murmur with high-sounding phrases, Lord, rid the earth of them! With our tongues, they say, we *can* do great things; our lips are good friends to us; we own no master. Now, says the Lord, I will bear myself, on behalf of the helpless who are so ill used, of the poor who cry out so bitterly; I will win them redress, speak out for their cause. The promises of the Lord are true words, like silver that is melted down in the crucible to purify it, and runs to the ground when thus refined.<sup>3</sup> Yes, Lord, thou wilt watch over us, and keep us ever safe from these evil days.

See how the wicked come and go all around us! How high they are above us, and yet how great is the increase thou givest to a base breed of men!<sup>4</sup>

## PSALM 12

(13)

(To the melody a psalm of David.)

**L**ORD, now I will go all unsheltered, now thy love still be turned away from me? Each day brings a fresh load of care, fresh misery to my heart; must I be ever the sport of my enemies? Look upon me, O Lord my God, and listen to me; give light to these eyes, before they close in death; do not let my enemies claim the mastery.

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'His soul hates the friends of wrong-doing.'

<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'His upright shall see his face.'

<sup>3</sup> It is not certain what the end of his verse means. Some commentators think there is a reference to Job: 'turned to the land.'

<sup>4</sup> Literally 'sons of Adam,' a term which is sometimes used slightly, to mean 'sons of inferior degree.' This last sentence of the psalm is very obscure in the Hebrew text.

« my persecutors triumph over my fall: I trust myself on thy mercy; soon may this heart boast of redress granted. Then my song shall be of the goodness the Lord has shewn me, my psalm shall honour the name of the Lord, the most High.<sup>1</sup>

## PSALM 13

(14)

(To the *real*, a psalm of David.)

**T**HERE is no God above us, is the fixed thought of *evil* hearts; a false view and harmful, never a man but lives unwise. The Lord looks down from heaven at the race of man, to find one soul that reflects, and makes God his aim; but no, all have misread the mark and disappointed him; a life well lived is nowhere to be found. Their mouths are gaping wounds; they use their tongues to flatter; under their lips the poison of asps is hidden. Their mouths overflow with curses and calumny. They run hot-foot to shed blood; havoc and ruin follow in their path; the way of peace is unknown to them. They do not keep the fear of God before their eyes. What, can they learn nothing, all these traffickers in inquiry, who find themselves fit on this people of mine, as if it were based for their sating, and never invoke the Lord's name! What wonder if sin remains there, where they have no cause to fear? Just scale the Lord manifests with his goodness, but you have directed the hopes of the oppressed; it is for the just to put their confidence in the Lord. Oh, that it might dawn over Zion, Israel's deliverance! Day of gladness for Jacob, day of Israel's triumph, when the Lord restores the fortunes of his own people.<sup>2</sup>

## PSALM 14

(15)

(A psalm of David.)

**W**HICH is it, Lord, that will make his home in thy tabernacle, rest on the mountain whose thy sanctuary is? One that guides his steps without fault, and gives to all their due; one that tells the truth in his own heart, utters no uncharitable word, never defrauds a friend, or believes ill of his neighbour. He saves the reprobate, keeping his

<sup>1</sup> The last twelve words are wanting in the Hebrew text.

<sup>2</sup> This psalm is a curious literary problem; the whole of it can be found elsewhere in the Bible. Verses 1 and 2, with the first sentence of verse 3, and verses 4-7, reappear in Psalm 54, with some variation in verse 6. The remainder of verse 3 is found in the Greek and Latin, but not in the Hebrew text. It corresponds exactly with verses 10-13 in the third chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and appears to be a cento of Scriptural quotations taken from the following sources: Ps. 144, 139-4, 145, Is. 39:2, Ps. 118.



confidence for such as fear God, abides by the promise he made to his neighbors: "Heeds without ceasing, and takes no bribe to condemn the innocent. His wife as lives will stand firm for ever."

## PSALM 15

(16)

(An inscription for a neophyte, for David himself.)

**K**EEP me safe, Lord; I put my trust in thee. The Lord, whom I own  
as my God! all the good I possess is nothing to him.<sup>1</sup> There are  
faithful souls in this land of his; wondrous love he gives me of their com-  
passionality. But many have sinned, and been quick to follow their own  
ways;<sup>2</sup> I will not join with such as these in building the foundation where  
they drink blood; I will not take for hidden names on my lips. No, it is  
the Lord I claim for my price, the Lord who fills my days, thou, and no  
other, wilt secure my inheritance to me. Pardon is more mine to  
my liking; welcome the lot's choice! Merciful be the Lord, who schools  
me, late into the night my latest thoughts chasten me. Always I can  
keep the Lord within sight; always he is at my right hand, so make me  
stand firm. Glad and merry I am, heart and lips of me; my body, too,  
shall rest in confidence: thou wilt not leave my soul in the place of a  
death, or allow thy faithful servant to see corruption. Thou hast shown  
me the way of life; thou wilt make me full of goodness in thy presence;  
at thy right hand are delights that will endure for ever.

## PSALM 16

(17)

(A prayer of David.)

**L**ORD, to my just complaint give ear, do not spare my cry for aid.  
Listen to this prayer of mine; they are no treacherous lips that utter  
it. At thy judgements-seat I claim stand, look for the warrior justice:

<sup>1</sup> In the Latin, "when he has sworn to his neighbor," in the Hebrew text, "when he has sworn to his own disadvantage."

<sup>2</sup> That is, in the Latin, "contrary to him," according to the Hebrew text, it most probably means "in sinning as compared with him."

<sup>3</sup> Literally, "their inheritance was sanctified afterwards they made names" (but it is evident from what follows that this refers to other families, not to those mentioned in the previous verse. Some have considered "their idols were multiplied," or "they can utter other gods" from the Hebrew but the Latin is not part of this interpretation. The Hebrew word for "idolatries" comes from a root which is sometimes used of praising God to sing (Ps. 114, 15, 19, 20). "Piousness names" literally, "their names" but it can hardly be deduced that the names of false gods are referred to. Cf. 1 Chr. 16, 23.

from thy scrutiny. Hast thou not read my heart, drawing near in the darkness to test me as if by fire, still no treachery found in me? Never may I shake the base thoughts of mine; still mindful of thy warnings, I have kept to the paths that are hard to follow.<sup>1</sup> Do thou maintain my steps firm in the even ways, never allowing my feet to stumble. And now I cry to thee, O God who ever interest me; turn thy ear towards me, and listen to my plea. Thy mercy, thy signal mercy thou, none ever trusted thy help in vain. From the evils that defy thy will<sup>2</sup> protect me as a man protects the apple of his eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wings, safe from the evil-doers who wrong me. See how my enemies close about me maliciously, their hearts set to play;<sup>3</sup> a bond on their lips! Even now they have pulled me down, and are closing in about me, their eyes fixed on the ground, avoiding mine;<sup>4</sup> better had a lion caught me, eager for his prey, a young lion that waits hidden in its lair. Revere thyself, Lord; frown at him and shove him to the ground; deliver me from the evil-doers, me, thy chosen weapon, from the enemy that defies thee!<sup>5</sup> O Lord, shall they live to share the fancies thou grantest to so few on earth; whose desires thou dost satisfy with treasures from thy store, who are enriched with offspring, and can leave their inheritance to their own children?<sup>6</sup> As for me, I will come with upright heart into thy presence innocent; and when thy glory dawns, I shall be well content.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'I have kept to the paths that are hard to follow', the Hebrew (not more probably meant, 'I have shunned the paths of the wicked'.)

<sup>2</sup> It is possible that the words 'from the evils that defy thy will' belong not to this psalm but to the last.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'stirring up their own fire,' that is, against their hearts.

<sup>4</sup> Others would interpret the phrase (in the Hebrew) as meaning 'they have on their eyes (or, as we should say, their minds) no resting as down to the ground.'

<sup>5</sup> Others would render the Latin, 'deliver me from the power of the evil-doer, and deliver thy sword from the enemy,' but the sense of this is hard to determine. The Hebrew probably means 'Deliver me with thy sword.'

<sup>6</sup> Both the Hebrew and the Latin (which may have arisen from a false reading in the Greek) are very obscure. The rendering here given seems the best way of taking the Latin; it is difficult to believe that the wicked are described as people whom God enriches, even in this life, with his store of treasures.

<sup>7</sup> 'When thy glory dawns, I shall be well content'; it is possible to interpret the Hebrew as meaning, 'when I wake up, I shall be well content with thy likeness.'

## PSALM 17

(18)

(To the chief: a psalm for David, the servant of the Lord. He addressed to the Lord the words of this song, on the day when God delivered him from the hand of Saul, and from the hands of all his enemies; as follows.)

**S**HALL I not love thee, Lord, my only defender? The Lord is my strength-foreman, my stronghold, my saviour; it is my God that brings me out of need, and gives me confidence; he is my shield, my weapon of deliverance, my place of refuge. Pleased by the Lord when I invoke his name, I am secure from my enemies. Death's terrors were near at hand, deep flowed the tide of wrong, to drown me; the terror of the grave was all about me, deadly scars had trodden my feet. One cry to the Lord, in my affliction, and word of summons to my God, and he, from his sanctuary, heeded in my voice the complaint I made before him from a hearing.

Earth's champion delivered and shook, the very foundations of the hills quaked and quaked before his anger; smoke went up before his indignant presence, and a consuming fire, burning souls were kindled as he went. He laid heaven sleep, and came down to earth, with noise at his feet; he came, mounted on the cherubim, borne up on the wings of the wind, shrouded in darkness, enveloped with black rain-storms that fell from the clouds of heaven. The clouds, too, at the brightness of his coming, parted in a storm of hail and burning coals; hail and burning coals, as the Lord sent his thunder from heaven, as the Most High let his voice be heard. How they scattered when he raised down his arrows as a storm, how they fled in confusion before the volleys of his lightning! The secret springs of the rivers came to light, the very foundations of the world were laid bare, when thou didst thunders them, Lord, when thou didst blow upon them with the breath of thy anger. Then he reached us down from heaven, caught hold of me, rescued me from that land, saved me from triumphant malice, from the enemies that held me at their mercy. Still days, when they faced me at every hand! Yet the Lord stood by me, and brought me out into freedom again, his power love belaboured me.

And still as he sees me distressed, the Lord will require me, as he sees me in distress in act, he will make return. Have I not kept true to the Lord's is

<sup>1</sup> The whole of this psalm has been preserved in an independently among the records of King David's reign, with very slight variations (3 Kg. xxi).

10 *as yet*! Have I not been ever loyal to my God? No law of his, but I have  
 11 kept it before my eyes; no task he laid upon me have I refused, ever  
 12 stainless in his presence, ever watchful to keep myself clear of wrong,  
 13 ever faithful, ever bound guileless in act, the Lord will requite me. Long-  
 14 ingly dost thou trust those who love thee, and biddest the innocent go  
 15 unharmed; he that is thy own shall find thee his very own, from the man  
 16 who turns against thee thou wilt turn away. The humble folk thou wilt  
 bring deliverance; the proud, with their haughty looks, thou wilt bring  
 17 down to earth. It is thou, Lord, that keepst the lamp of my hopes still  
 18 burning; shine on the darkness about me, O my God. In thy strength I  
 shall be proof against all attack; in thy God's strength thou dost defeat every-  
 19 thing.

20 Such is my God, unswayed in his dealings; his promises are like metal  
 21 set in the fire; he is the sure defence of all who trust in him. Who  
 22 but the Lord is God? What other God can there be, except our God? It  
 is he that glads me with strength; he that makes me go on my way  
 23 untroubled. He makes me sure-footed as the deer, and gives me the  
 24 freedom of the hills; those hands, through him, are skilled in battle,  
 25 those arms are a match for any bow of bronze. Thy saving power, Lord,  
 is my defence, thy right hand supports me; and still thou hast thou  
 26 for my recreation, I am schooled by thy chastisement.<sup>1</sup> Through thee,  
 27 my steps are unswayed as I go, my road never faltering; I can overtake  
 the enemies I pursue, and never turn home all I have made an end of  
 28 them; I can bow them to their knees, and lead them down at my feet.  
 29 Thou gladdest me about with a warrior's strength; whatever power chal-  
 30 lenges me, thou dost subdue before me, putting my enemies to flight,  
 31 and throwing all their makes into confusion. Loudly they cry out to the  
 32 Lord, heave of aid, but he makes no answer to their cries. I can crush  
 them to pieces, like the dust which the wind blows along; I can break  
 them away like water from the vessels.

33 Not was it enough, of domestic love, to rid me; a world should be my  
 34 vessel: new nations should pay me homage, quick to do my bidding. See  
 where they come, the alien born, come hobbling out of their deserted  
 35 towns, unshod men, to cringe before me!<sup>2</sup> Blessed be the living Lord  
 36 who is my God, praised be the God who rescues me! It is thou, my God,  
 that bringest me redress, that grantest me dominion over my people; that  
 37 artest me from the spite of my enemies: so that I am high above the  
 38 reach of their assaults, proof against their violence. Then, Lord, I will

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text the second half of this verse reads 'And thy condemnation has crushed me.'

<sup>2</sup> "Their deserted towns"; the Hebrew text has "prisoners" (or perhaps "strong-holds").

give thee thanks in the hearing of all the nations, singing in praise of thy name. What ransom thy mercy grants to the king thou hast answered, to me David, and David's line for ever.

## PSALM 18

(18)

(To the staff; a psalm of David.)

**S**EE how the stars proclaim God's glory, how the radii of heaven between his throne and earth! Each day echoes its secret to the east, each night passes on to the west its revelations of knowledge, one word, one instant of truth that does not make itself heard,<sup>1</sup> all their utterance is this every hour, till their message reaches the ends of the world. And where the sun is, there he sees up his tabernacle; the sun, which comes out as a bridegroom comes from his bed, and cracks like some great runner who sees the track before him.<sup>2</sup> Here, at one end of heaven, is its starting-place, and its course reaches to the other; none can escape its burning heat.

The Lord's perfect law, how it brings the soul back to life; the Lord's unshakable decrees, how they make the simple learned! How plain are the duties which the Lord reveals, the treasure of man's heart; how clear is the commandment the Lord gives, the enlightenment of man's eyes! How sacred a thing is the fear of the Lord, which is blessing for ever; how stirring are the words which the Lord makes, one and all giving proof of their power! All these are more precious than gold, than a hoard of pure gold, sweeter than the honey, dropping from its comb. By these I, thy servant, live; none ever died by them that was not richly rewarded. And yet, who knows his own feelings? If I have sinned unwittingly, do thou absolve me. Keep me ever thy own servant, far from the worship of other gods; so long as there do not food in our age, I will yet be without lack, I will yet be innocent of the great sin. Every word on my lips, every thought in my heart, what thou wouldst have it be, O Lord, my desires, my intentions!

<sup>1</sup> The meaning of the Hebrew text here is quite uncertain; the literal sense of the Latin is probably, 'there are no words in utterance (of theirs) which sound is not heard.'

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text has 'He has made a tabernacle for the sun in heaven'; the Latin, 'He has put his tabernacle in the sun,' probably in the sense that that sun is the tabernacle in his shining witness (Ps. 136, 32) as the tabernacle was in his people in the wilderness.

<sup>3</sup> Or perhaps 'from none of a strange race'; the Hebrew text has, 'from the period' or perhaps 'from the of people.'

## PSALM 20

(20)

(To the end; a psalm of David.)

1 **T**HIS Lord intent to save in thy time of need, the power of Jacob's  
2 God be thy protection! May he send thee aid from his holy place,  
3 watch over thee, there as thou stand; may he remember all thy offerings,  
4 and fulfil earnest in thy burnt-sacrifice. May he grant thee what thy  
5 heart desires, crown thy hopes with fulfilment. So may we rejoice in  
6 thy deliverance, extolling the name of the Lord our God; abundantly  
7 may he grant thy prayer. Shall I doubt that the Lord protect the king  
8 he has anointed, will listen to him from his sanctuary in heaven? Is  
9 not his right hand strong to save? Let others talk of horses and chariots;  
10 our refuge is the name of the Lord our God. See how they are caught  
11 in the snare, and brought low, how we keep our feet, and stand erect. O  
12 Lord, save the king,<sup>1</sup> and hear us in the hour when we call upon thee.

## PSALM 20

(20)

(To the end; a psalm of David.)

1 **W**ELL may the king rejoice, Lord, in thy protection, well may he  
2 triumph in thy saving power! Never a wish to his heart has thou  
3 disappointed, never a prayer on his lips denied. With abundance blessing  
4 thou dost meet him on his way, dost set a jewelled crown on his head.  
5 Prays he for life? Long continuance of his reign thou dost grant him,  
6 as last unending till the end of time. Great is the name thy protection  
7 has won for him glory and high honour thou hast made his. An ever-  
8 lasting monument of thy goodness, comforted by the smile of thy  
9 favour, he stands firm, trusting in the Lord, the mercy of the most High  
10 is with him.  
11 Ay, but thy enemies—they shall feel thy power, that right hand will  
12 not leave their making unquelled. As thy frown, they will wither away  
13 like grass in the oven; whirled away by the Lord's anger, burnt up in its  
14 flames. Thou wilt rid the head of their band, their ear will vanish from  
15 the world of men. See how all their false designs against thee, all their

<sup>1</sup> Some would understand the Hebrew text as meaning, 'O Lord, our King, save us.'

pleas come to nothing! They will put them to flight, drive them back to where the angels await them.<sup>1</sup>

Stand high above us, Lord, in thy protecting strength; our song, our praise, shall be of thy goodness.

## PSALM 31

(32)

(To the end, as he accepted in the morning a psalm of David.)

**M**Y God, my God, look upon me; why hast thou forsaken me? Why receivest my sinful words, whence dost thou, who art my salvation? Thou dost not answer, my God, when I cry out to thee day and night, and I am pained with grief.<sup>2</sup> Thou art there above the firmament, dwelling in the holy place, Israel's ancient house. It was in thee that our fathers trusted, and thou didst reward their trust by delivering them: they cried to thee, and thou wast near; so need to be ashamed of such trust is thine. But I, poor wretch, have no manhood left; I am a by-word to all, the laughing-stock of the people. All those who catch sight of me fall to mocking, snatching at my words, while they set their heads to scorn. He committed himself to the Lord, why does not the Lord come to his rescue, and set his favourite free?

What hand has done these things to me, from my mother's womb? Who did set me my refuge when I hung at the breast? From the hour of my birth, thou art my guardian; since I left my mother's womb, thou art my God! Do not leave me now, when trouble is done at hand, when I have none to help me. My enemies are all about me, bounding me in, pushed close as to a herd of swine, strong as bulls; no might a lion thrusts me with its jaws, roaring for its prey. I am spent as apple-water, all my bones out of joint, my heart turned to confusion was within me; my strength has been shattered up, like clay in the baking, and my tongue sticks fast in my mouth: thou hast laid me in the dust, to die. Preceding about me like a pack of dogs, their wicked conspiracy hedges me in; they have torn hairs

<sup>1</sup> Verses 9-11 are perhaps addressed to God, more probably to the psalmist himself. The second half of verse 11 appears to mean, in the Hebrew text, 'Thou wilt shoot down (or with thy bowstrings against their faces) but the scattering is somewhat doubtful. The Latin church regards as a different reading of the text the words which to be 'Thou wilt drive their faces wrong (or by means of) thy men (or things)' left over.' Presumably the picture is that of a commander who throws his hand-held weapons to interrupt a fleeing enemy, or 'knock off' the enemy into an ambush.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'and (it does) not lead to with help to me.' The Hebrew can be, 'and not to my strength,' which some interpreters as meaning, 'and it gives me no refuge.'

in my hands and feet, they reach every bone in my body, as they stand around watching me, gazing at me. They divide my spirit among them, as they lay for my perdition. Then, Lord, do not stand at a distance, as a thief would sidestep me; look to my defence. Only life is left me; save me from the sword, from the darts of those dogs: rescue me from the very mouth of the lion, the very horns of the wild-oxen that have brought me thus low.

21 Then I will proclaim thy mercies to my brethren; where thy people gather, I will join in singing thy praise. Praise the Lord, all ye that are his worshippers: become to him from the sons of Jacob, reverence as to him from Israel's seed! He has not scorned or slighted the appeal of the afflicted, nor turned his face away from me; my cry for help did not go unattended. Take what I owe thee, my song of praise before a great assembly. I will pay my vows to the Lord in the sight of his worshippers: the poor shall eat and drink, and have their fill, those who seek for the Lord: he will give them thanks, their hearts refreshed eternally. The hardest Godless on earth will bethink themselves of the Lord, and come back to him; all the sons of the heathen will worship before him, as the Lord is worthy to be praised, the whole world's homage is his due. The great ones of the earth fear in his presence, and adore; men brought low, even to the dust, bow down at his feet.<sup>1</sup> 'I, too, shall live on before him,' and begin as children to serve him; the Lord will claim for his own a generation still to come; heaven itself will make known his faithfulness to a people yet to be born, a people of the Lord's own choosing.<sup>2</sup>

## PSALM 33

(33)

(A psalm of David.)

1 **T**HE Lord is my shepherd; how can I lack anything? He gives me a resting-place where there is pasture, and leads me out by cool waters, to make me live again. As he himself pledged, by sure paths he leads me; what though I walk with the shadow of death all around me? When I fear none, while thou art with me; thy aid, thy drink are my comfort. What though my enemies trouble me? Full in their view thou dost spread a banquet before me; richly thou dost anoint my head with

<sup>1</sup> The meaning of this verse is quite uncertain.

<sup>2</sup> 'I, too, shall live on before him,' according to the Hebrew text, this should be 'and their souls have no life,' belonging to verse 9 as part of the description that every place of the underworld.

<sup>3</sup> In the Hebrew text this verse is quite different; it is generally taken as meaning, 'Villages shall be given to the (young) generation about the Lord, they will come and tell a people yet to be born about his faithfulness; due to him accomplished it.'



all, generous the cup that sends away my sorrow! All my life thy goodness  
 pursues me; through the long years, the Lord's house shall be my  
 dwelling-place.

## PSALM 43

(24)

(On the first day of the week. A psalm of David.)

**T**HE Lord owns earth, and all earth's fulness, the crowd world, and  
 all its inhabitants. Who else has built it out from the sea, peined  
 it on the hidden streams?

Who dares climb the mountain of the Lord, and appear in his  
 sanctuary? The guileless is not, the pure in heart, one who never played  
 fast and loose with his soul,<sup>1</sup> by swearing treacherously to his neighbour.  
 His is to receive a blessing from the Lord, needy does God, his sure  
 defender; his the true bond that still holds, still keeps for the presence  
 of the God of Jacob.

Swing back the doors,<sup>2</sup> captains of the guard; swing back, immemorial  
 gates, to let the King enter in triumph! Who is this great King? Who  
 but the Lord, mighty and strong, the Lord mighty in battle! Swing back  
 the doors, captains of the guard; swing back, immemorial gates, to let the  
 King enter in triumph! Who is this great King? It is the Lord of Armies  
 that comes here on his way triumphant.

## PSALM 44

(25)

(To the end a psalm of David.)

**A**LL my heart goes out to thee, O Lord, my God. Belie thou never this  
 trust I have in thee, let not my enemies boast of my downfall.  
 Can any that trust in thee be disappointed, as they are disappointed, who  
 wrongly forsake the right? Direct my way, Lord, as thou wilt, teach me  
 thy own paths. Ever let thy truth guide and teach me, O God, my  
 deliverer, my abiding hope. Forget not, Lord, thy pity, thy mercies of  
 long ago. Give heed no more to the sin and folly of my youth, but  
 think mercifully of me, as thou, Lord, art ever gracious. How gracious  
 is the Lord, how faithful; light of the traveller that has missed his path!  
 In his own love he will take the humble in his own paths the shepherd  
 he will guide. Justice be thy keeping of covenant and ordinance, and the

<sup>1</sup> Some authorities give 'with my soul'—that is, *within* God's name is vain.  
 But the Hebrew text is generally understood as meaning 'not who has not  
 lived up to his trust to vain things,' that is, to false gods.

<sup>2</sup> In verse 25, the Hebrew text has 'Lift up your heads, you gates.'

- 11 **L**ord's dealings will be ever gracious, ever faithful with thee. Kindly be thy judgment of my sin, Lord, for thy own honour's sake, my greatest sin.
- 12 Let a man but trust the Lord, in the path chosen for him he shall find guidance enough. Much joy he shall have of his land, and to his sons leave them. No man ever feared the Lord, but found support in him, and perfection in his covenant. On the Lord I fix my eyes continually, trusting him to save my feet from the snare. Pity me, Lord, as thou hast not yet forsaken and forlorn. Quickly as my troubles increase do thou, O Lord, save me from my distress. Rootless and fallen, I claim thy pity, to my sin be merciful. See how many are my foes, and how bitter is the grudge they bear me. Take my soul into thy keepings come to my rescue, and do not let me be disappointed of my trust in thee. Uprightness and purity find a friend in me, as I wait patiently for thy help. When wilt thou deliver Israel, my God, from all his troubles?

## PSALM 26

(26)

(To the rest, a psalm of David.)

- L**ORD, be thou my judge, have I not paid my steps clear of wrong? Have I trusted in the Lord, only to stumble on my path? Test me, Lord, put me to the proof, assay my heart's desire and thoughts. Ever I keep thy statutes in mind, thy faithfulness commands my love. I have not consorted with false men, or joined in plotting evil; I have shunned the company of the wicked, never sat at any one with sinners. With the pure in heart I will wash my hands clean, and take my place among them at thy altar, bringing thee to the sound of thy psalm, telling the story of all thy wonderful deeds. How well, Lord, I love thy house in its beauty, the place where thy own glory dwells! Lord, come cross this soul for fear with the wicked, this life among the bloodthirsty; hands ever stained with guilt, palms ever itching for a belied. Be it mine to guide my steps clear of wrong; deliver me in thy mercy. On sure ground my feet are set, where thy people gather, Lord, I will join in blessing thy name.

## PSALM 26

(27)

(A psalm of David before he was assailed.)

- T**HE Lord is my light and my deliverance, whom have I to fear? The Lord watches over my life, whom shall I hold in dread? Vainly the malicious close about me, as if they would tear me in pieces, vainly

my enemies threaten me; all at once they stumble and fall. Though a whole host were arrayed against me, my heart would be undaunted; though an armed host should threaten me, will I would not lose my confidence. One request I have made of the Lord, let me claim it still, so dwell in the Lord's house my whole life long, gazing at the beauty of the Lord, boasting his sanctuary. In his royal tent he hides me, in the innermost recess of his royal tent, safe from peril. On a rock fastness he lifts me high up, no hole far above my enemies' reach! I will join with the dancing, and make an offering of triumphant music in this tabernacle of his, singing and psalming the Lord.

Listen to my voice, Lord, when I cry to thee; hear and spare. True to my heart's promise, I have eyes only for thee! I long, Lord, for thy presence. Do not hide thy face, do not turn away from thy servant in anger; but give me still thy aid; do not forsake me, do not neglect me, O God, my defender. Father and mother may neglect me, but the Lord takes me into his care. Lord, show me the way thou hast chosen for me, to guide me into the right path, lest as I am with excusing, do not give me over to the will of my oppressors, when false witnesses stand up to accuse me, with malice and fury.<sup>2</sup> My faith is, I will yet live to see the Lord's goodness. Wait patiently for the Lord to help thee; be brave, and let thy heart take comfort; wait patiently for the Lord.

## PSALM 27

(28)

(A psalm of David.)

TO thee, Lord, I say; my God, do not leave my cry unanswered; speak to me, or I am no better than a dead man, sinking to the grave. Listen, Lord, to my plea, as I raise my hands in prayer towards thy holy temple. Do not scold me, like the wicked, before thy judgement-seat; let me not stand in doom with men who traffic in iniquity, men who talk of peace to their neighbours, while their hearts are full of malice. For these, the reward of their own ways, their own evil ways, as they did, be it done to them, in their own coils repaid. Of like Lord's love, the Lord's ways, they took no heed; rule be theirs, rule irrevocable.

Blessed be the Lord's name, my plea is heard; the Lord is my strength and shield. Trusting in him, I found deliverance, and with boldness recovered right heartily I praise him. The Lord defends his own, protects and

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'My heart has said, My face has sought thee.' The Hebrew runs here, 'My heart has said, seek my face.'

<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew text perhaps rather 'who breathe out violence.'

delivers the king he has anointed. Lord, save thy people, from the one  
 oppress them; be their shepherd, abundant in thy arms upholding them.

## PSALM 28

(15)

(A psalm of David, at the finishing of the tabernacle.)

**S**OUNDS of God, make your offering to the Lord, an offering to the  
 Lord of roaring rains. Make an offering to the Lord of honour and  
 glory, an offering to the Lord of the glory that befits his name; worship  
 the Lord, here, in his holy precincts.<sup>1</sup> The voice of the Lord is heard  
 over the waters, when the glorious God thunders, the Lord, thunder-  
 ing over restless waters: the Lord's voice is his power, the Lord's voice  
 is his majesty. The Lord's voice, that breaks the cedars, the Lord breaks  
 the cedars of Lebanon; the Holy One throws them down, as when cold  
 on Lebanon is thrown down by the head of the wild ox.<sup>2</sup> The Lord's  
 voice shatters those shafts of flame; the Lord's voice makes the wilderness  
 rack; the Lord, rocking the wilderness of Cadan. The Lord's voice puts  
 the black in travail; who has the Lord strip the deep forest bare? Where-  
 a while, in his sanctuary, there is no sound but tells of his glory. Out of  
 a roaring flood, the Lord makes a dwelling-place; the Lord sits enthroned  
 as king for ever. And this Lord will give strength to his people; the Lord  
 will give his people his own blessing of peace.

## PSALM 29

(16)

(The psalm of a song at the dedication of David's house.)

**P**RAISE to thee, Lord, thou hast risen over thy persecution,  
 and humbled my enemies of their will; I cried out to the Lord my  
 God, and thou hast granted me recovery. So hast thou being me back,

<sup>1</sup> 'The finishing of the Tabernacle' is generally taken as referring to the close of the Feast of Tabernacles (the psalm is still used among the Jews in their liturgy of Passover). In the Hebrew text, there is no mention of offering rains.

<sup>2</sup> 'His holy precincts': the Hebrew text has 'the beauty of holiness.'

<sup>3</sup> The Lutes here mean literally, 'and he will shew them glory like a mill of Lebanon, the beloved One, looking like the young of antelope.' 'The beloved one' is a title elsewhere given to God's people, but nowhere so fittingly; its sense in Hebrew is rather 'the upright one.' It seems clear that the Septuagint, and the Latin in translating it, have introduced one of the Hebrew words, the Hebrew text has 'he shales them like a mill, Lebanon and Lebanon (that is, Harman) like a young antelope.' The antelope means either the buffalo or some kind of antelope, according to the various opinions.

Lord, from the place of shadows, rescue me from the very edge of the grave. Sing praise to the Lord, thou, faithful soul, beside his name with thankfulness. What if his vengeance falls weak when he is angry?<sup>1</sup> With his former life remains; sorrow is but the guest of a night, and joy comes in the morning.

I too, had thought, in the time of my prosperity, Nothing can shake me now: so firmly, Lord, thou hast established my kingdom! Then thou didst turn thy face away from me, and I was at peace no more. Lord, I was false to thy word to thee, to plead with my God. How will it profit us then to take my life? I can but go down into the grave; and will this dust give thanks to thee, or acknowledge, there, thy faithfulness? With pity the Lord heard me; the Lord himself, now, visit my pain. Thou hast so turned my sadness into rejoicing; thou hast undone the sackcloth I wore, and girded me about with gladness. So may this heart never tire of singing praise; O Lord my God, I will give thanks to thee for ever.

## PSALM 30

(31)

(To the end, a psalm of David; for bowlderness.)

**T**U thou, O Lord, I look for refuge, never let me be ashamed of my name; in thy faithful care, deliver me. Grant me sentence, and make a law to reverse me; my divine promise, my stronghold of defence, to save me from peril. Thou dost strengthen and defend me; thou, for thy own honour, dost guide and warfare me; by thee promised, I shall escape from the snare that lies hidden in my path. Into thy hands I committed my spirit; thou, God ever faithful, hast delivered me for thyself. Let fools provide themselves by trusting themselves on false promises; for me no refuge but the Lord. I will triumph and exult in thy mercy: it was thou that didst pierce my weakness, and save me when I was hard hearted; before the enemy's web could close around me, the open place lay at my feet.

And now, Lord, have compassion on my distress; weeping has dimmed my eyes, from me away, soul and body. My life is all grief, my years are but sighs, the very misery;<sup>2</sup> my strength flies away, my frame is wasted. Openly my foes deride me; even to my neighbours I am a thing of no worth; where my friends are asked, and the power-by whom my enemies;

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'His anger does but a moment.' To watch this, some would render when he is angry, 'and his favour lasts a lifetime.'

<sup>2</sup> According to the Hebrew text, 'my till thence.'

<sup>3</sup> 'False promises' the reference is probably to heathen worship.

<sup>4</sup> In the Hebrew text 'through my sin.'

- 10 I am lost to memory, like a dead man, discarded like a broken pitcher.  
 11 On every side their hiss whispering comes to my ears,<sup>1</sup> as powerful the  
 12 a conspiracy that threatens my life. And still, Lord, my trust in thee is  
 13 not shaken; still I cry, Thou art my God, my fate is in thy hand; save  
 14 me from the enemy's power, save me from my persecutors! Smile on thy  
 15 servant over mine, and deliver me in thy mercy. Lord, do not let me  
 16 plead in vain. Disappoint the wicked of their hopes, but thou down into  
 17 the abyss; let silence fall on those treacherous lips, that speak maliciously  
 18 of the innocent, in the days of their pains and sorrow.  
 19 What measure of loving-kindness, Lord, dost thou store up for the  
 20 man who fear thee, the men who trust thee, made known in art, for all  
 21 the world to see! Thy promise is a sanctuary, to hide them away from  
 22 the world's alarm; thy tabernacle a refuge from its noisy debate. Blessed  
 23 be the Lord, to whomsoever is his mercy, so strong the wall of his pro-  
 24 tection. I thought, bewildered, that thy wonderful care had lost sight of  
 25 me; but I cried out to thee, and thou thereupon didst listen to my plea.  
 26 Love the Lord, well, you who worship him, the Lord keeps faith with  
 27 his servants, and repays the actions of the proud above measure. Take  
 28 heart, keep high your courage, all you that wait patiently for the Lord.

## PSALM 31

(32)

(For David himself) of understanding.)

- 1 **B**LESSED are they who have their faith deepened, their trans-  
 2 gressions buried deep; blessed is the man who is not guilty in the  
 3 Lord's reckoning, the heart that hides no crimes. While I kept my  
 4 own secret, all day long I cried in thee is safety still my strength plied  
 5 away, turned down day and night by thy charabancs; and I found  
 6 about in pain, so deep did the thorn make.<sup>2</sup> At last I made my trans-  
 7 gressions known to thee, and hid my sin no longer; I will be my own  
 8 witness, I said, and confide my fate to the Lord; and with that, thou  
 9 didst remit the guilt of my sin. Let every devout soul, then, turn to thee  
 10 in prayer while it has time to reach thee; none will find access,<sup>3</sup> when the  
 11 waters are running deep in flood. Thou art my hiding-place, when  
 12 oppression rings me round; of thee is my triumph-song, rescue me from  
 13 my besiegers.

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'and fear is round about me,' cf. Jer. 20:10.

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text in the second half of this verse appears to mean, 'all my transgressions was withered away (as if) by summer drought.'

<sup>3</sup> Literally 'they will not approach him.' Probably, in the Hebrew text, this means the waters will not approach the devout soul.

Praise, let me count thee, trace for thee the path thy feet should tread; let my presence march with thee. Do not be like the horse and the ass, that are senseless things; hold them in their snare with bait and bridle, so obviously they show thee.<sup>1</sup> Again and again the strong must defend the weak; he who trusts in the Lord finds seeking for enemy all around him. Just wait, be glad, and rejoice in the Lord; true hearts, rejoice your heart in him.

## PSALM 31

(33)

(A psalm of David.)

**T**RUMPET, just wait, in the Lord, true hearts, it is yours to praise him. Give thanks to the Lord with the stringed music, praise him with a harp of ten strings. For him let a new song be sung, give him of your best, sound the harp lustily. The Lord's word is true, he is faithful in all his dealings: compassion to lovers, and the just reward, for whole earth overflows with the Lord's goodness. It was the Lord's word that made the heavens, the breath of his lips that peopled them; he it is who starts up the waters of the sea as in a clasp, and makes a collar of its deep waves. Let the whole earth hold the Lord in dread, let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him; let again, and they were made, let him give his command, and their frame was fashioned. At the Lord's rebuking, a nation's purposes come to nothing, a people's designs are frustrated, kings are baffled of their will: his own designs stand firm for ever; generations after generations, his will does not reverse.

Blessed the nation that calls the Lord its own God, the people he has chosen not to be hid. Looking down from heaven, he watches all is needed, his immovable dwelling has the whole world in view; he has fashioned such man's nature, and weighs the actions of each. There is no protection for kings in powerful armies, for great warriors in abundant prowess; nor shall horses avail them against God, brute strength that is contempt seen. It is the Lord, marching over those who fear him and crown him in his mercy, that will protect their lives, will feed them in times of famine. Patiently we wait for the Lord's help; he is our strength and our shield; in him our hearts will find confidence, in his holy name we are sure. Lord, let thy mercy rest upon us, who put all our confidence in thee.

<sup>1</sup> Some understood the Horse and Ass as meaning that the horse or ass will run on its hind legs if it is bridle. The sense of the Latin is uncertain, it can be taken as referring to Almighty God, "Held down is with his and bridle, the weak who will not approach thee?"

## PSALM 31

(34)

(For David, when he disguised himself in the court of Achishlech, so that Achishlech sent him away, and he escaped.)<sup>1</sup>

1 **A**T all times I will bless the Lord; his praise shall be as my lips  
2 continuously. We all my boasting in the Lord, since to me, humble  
3 souls, and rejoice. Come, sing the Lord's praise with me, let us extol his  
4 name together. Did I not look to the Lord, and find a hearing, did he  
5 not deliver me from all my troubles? Enter his presence, and find there  
6 righteousness; here is no room for dishonest looks. Pitilessly did my  
7 will fail on the Lord and gain his ear, and he rescued from all their  
8 afflictions. Guardian of those who fear the Lord, his angel encamps at  
9 their side, and brings deliverance. How gracious the Lord is! Tender and  
10 merciful is blessed is the man that learns to trust in him. It is for you, his  
11 chosen servants, to fear the Lord; those who fear him never go wanting.  
12 Surely do the proud fall into danger and wars? blessing they lack not  
13 that look to him.

14 Know, then, my children, what the fear of the Lord is: come and know  
15 to my teaching. Long life, and prosperous days, who would have these  
16 for the asking? My counsel is, keep thy tongue clear of harm, and thy  
17 lips free from every treacherous word. Thought of evil cherish thou, but  
18 never do good; let peace be all thy quest and aim. On the upright the  
19 Lord's eye ever looks favourably; his ears are open to their pleading.  
20 Perilous is his throne for the wrong-doer; he will soon make their name  
21 vanish from the earth. Hushed by the cry of the innocent, the Lord  
22 sets them free from all their afflictions. So near is he to patient hearts,  
23 so ready to defend the humbled spirit. Through a hundred trials hasten  
24 the innocent, the Lord will bring him safely through them all. Under  
25 the Lord's keeping, every boat of his is safe; not one of them shall suffer  
26 harm. Whither will come to an evil end, the creature of innocence will  
27 bear their punishment.

28 The Lord will claim his servants as his own; they go unreprieved that  
29 put their trust in him.

<sup>1</sup> See 1 Kg. 20, 20 and following. The Hebrew text here gives Achishlech, instead of Achishlechi; in the Book of Kings, he is called Achish.

<sup>2</sup> For 'the proud,' the Hebrew text has 'the young men.'



## PSALM 58

(35)

(David's song.)

**L**ORD, reform my wrongs; destroy the enemies who give no rest.  
 Legions are, girding weapons and the shield, baring himself in my  
 defence. Unfencing thy sword, and bar the way against my pursuers;  
 whips in my hands, I am here to smite them. For my mortal enemies,  
 shame and disappointment, for my ill-wishers one and all, rein and re-  
 straint; dash before the wind, with the angel of the Lord to smite them,  
 beset and hemmed on their way, with the angel of the Lord  
 in pursuit! Wastefully they have laid their costly ransom for naught, vainly  
 they have laughed at my misfortune;<sup>1</sup> now let the net override them  
 unknown, now let the snare they hid close round them, their own net,  
 now how they fall head! Mine is triumph in the Lord, no tithes delight  
 in his saving power: this be the cry of my whole being. There is none  
 like thee, Lord, who dost rescue the afflicted from the hand of tyrants,  
 the poor, the destitute, from his oppressor!

See how false witnesses have come forward, to broadcast me over  
 charges of which I know nothing: how they have repaid my kindness  
 with cruelty, and left me homeless! What did I do, when they began  
 to trouble me thus?<sup>2</sup> I went out in riddance, and humbled my pride with  
 weeping; and all my prayer hid itself in my own bosom. I went on my  
 way peacefully, treating them like friends and brothers; I humbled  
 myself, so a secret hunter hunted for grief.<sup>3</sup> Now they seek to  
 triumph over my misfortune, when punishments overtook in upon me,  
 that meant no harm.<sup>4</sup> Now they would smite;<sup>5</sup> but still gave me no  
 respite, hating me, heaping mockery on mockery, gnawing their teeth  
 at me. Lord, wilt thou cease here upon to see it? Wilt thou leave my life  
 unprotected at the mercy of these roaring lions? Let me live to praise  
 and thank thee before the multitude that throng thy courts.

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text has, 'they have dug a pit for me.'

<sup>2</sup> 'When they began to trouble me thus,' the Hebrew text has 'when they were in distress,' as if King David were recalling his earlier troubles in those words of his, 'My prayer has itself in my own bosom,' rather in the sense that it made an impression on his conscience (cf. Job, xxi. 16, or Isaiah, li. 10).

<sup>3</sup> The sense of this verse is not certain in the second part of it, the Hebrew text has 'I went forward in seeking to me that weep for his people.'

<sup>4</sup> These would smite, 'when punishments overtook in upon me unawares.'

<sup>5</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'they are set to pieces.'

a No more the joy of triumph in the eye of powder-madness foe, than  
 a vainly wouldst thou! Time was when, they called to me personally enough,  
 yet all the while they were plotting, and their talk had quarrels in the  
 a heart. Now they cry out against me speedily, I say, for that we should  
 a have lived to see this! Thou see, Lord, hast seen it, do not pass it by in  
 a silence; Lord, do not abandon me. Break thyself and take my part, give  
 a me speedy rescue, my Lord and my God. As thou art just, O Lord my  
 a God, give thy sword for me, never let them triumph over me; never let  
 them think, all goes well, and boast that they have made a prey of me.  
 a Fill them with shame and with awe, the men who delight in my mis-  
 a fortunes; cover them with confusion and self-reproach, the enemies that  
 a triumph over me. Joy and gladness be theirs, who applaud my inno-  
 a cence to the Lord by their cry, who wish well to his servant. And all  
 day long, for thy just avenging, this tongue shall make known thy praise.

PSALM 35

(36)

(To the melody for David himself; the Lord's servant.)

a **T**HE sinners think to keep his evil ways secret, supposing that he  
 a has God to fear; plans treacherously under that watchful eye, till at  
 a last his sin comes to light in all its barefacedness.<sup>1</sup> His word on his lips  
 but is cruel and false; never a wholesome thought his mind harbours.  
 a He lies awake plotting mischief, and leads himself to every evil dream,  
 never weary of wrongdoing.  
 a Lord, thy mercy is high as heaven; thy faithfulness reaches to the  
 a clouds; thy justice stands firm as the everlasting hills,<sup>2</sup> the wisdom of  
 a thy decrees is deep as the abyss. Lord, thou dost give protection to  
 a man and beast, so rich is thy divine mercy; under the shadow of thee  
 a wings the fowl chambers of earth will find confidence. Their waters will be  
 a refreshed with the measure of thy house; thou wilt bid them drink deep  
 a at thy fountain of mercies. In thee is the source of all life; thy  
 a brightness will break on our eyes like dawn. Give proof, then, of thy

<sup>1</sup> In verses 20 and 21, the Latin reads it might that there were two different verses in King David's generation, one of unrepentant friendship, and one of open hostility. But the Hebrew text has 'they did not talk to me personally.' The second half of verse 20 is obscure; the Hebrew text has, 'their talk was against those who are quiet in the land.'

<sup>2</sup> In verses 2 and 3 the Hebrew text is obscure, and probably corrupt. The sense of the Latin appears to be that given above, though possibly 'in all its barefacedness' should be 'in the face of heaven.'

<sup>3</sup> Literally 'the hills of God,' a Hebrew form of speech for what is significant in nature.



12 say, but fall never, with the Lord's hand to uphold him. New youth  
 is past, and I have grown old; yet never did I see the good man forsaken,  
 13 or his children begging their bread; still his hands without stint, and men  
 14 call down blessings on his potency. Offend no more, rather do good,  
 15 and be at rest continually; the Lord is ever just, and will not abandon  
 his faithful servants. Perish the sinners, forgotten be the name of the evil-  
 16 doer, but those will hold their land, and live on: it always is rest.

17 Right sorrow is on the good man's lips, well weighted are all his  
 18 thoughts; his steps never falter, because the law of God rules in his  
 19 heart. Sinners be in wait, plotting against the life of the innocent;  
 20 but the Lord will never leave him in their power, never find him guilty  
 21 when he is arraigned. Trust the Lord, and follow the path he has chosen;

22 so he will set thee up in possession of thy land, and thou wilt live to see  
 23 the wicked come to ruin. Until yesterday, I saw the sinners exulted  
 24 high as the cedars of Lebanon; then, when I passed by, he was there no  
 25 longer, and I looked in vain to find him. Vigilantly preserve innocence,

26 and keep the right before thy eyes; for that thou peacefully wilt have  
 27 a name belied him, while the sinners are rooted out every one, and their  
 28 ungodlike names forgotten. When affliction comes, the Lord is the refuge  
 29 and defence of the innocent; the Lord will aid and deliver them, and  
 preserve them from the power of wickedness, because they put their trust  
 in him.

## PSALM 37

(38)

(A psalm of David; for a memorial concerning the sabbath.)

1 **T**HY anger, Lord, not thy vengeance, thy chastisement, not thy  
 2 condemnation! Thy wrath please me, thy hand press me hard;  
 3 thy anger has driven away all health from my body, never a bone sound  
 4 in it, so grievous are my sins. My own wrong-doing towers high above  
 5 me, hangs on me like a heavy burden; my wounds fester and smoulder,  
 6 with my own folly to blame. Bowed down, bowed to the earth, I go  
 7 moaning all day long, my whole frame cruelly buffeted;<sup>a</sup> my whole  
 8 body shivers to quiver, is crushed, I press down in the weariness of  
 9 my heart. Thus, Lord, knowest all my longing, no complaint of mine  
 10 escapes thee; restore my heart, give me strength, do very light that  
 11 thou in my eyes is mine no longer.

12 Friends and neighbours that start me keep their distance now;<sup>b</sup> old

<sup>a</sup> v. 8. In the Hebrew text, "ball of burning."<sup>b</sup> v. 12. In the Hebrew text, "Friends and neighbours keep their distance from me presently;" cf. *Apoc.* II. 10.

compassion than me. I am assailed by enemies that gudge me life as swift, night and day, with like whispering, their malice plots against me. And I, all the while, am deaf to their threats, I dumbly believe my accusers, mine the abiding ear, and the tongue that utters no defence. O On thee, Lord, my hopes are set; thou, O Lord my God, with thine is as me. Such is the prayer I make, Do not let my enemies triumph over me, boast of my downfall. See, I how believe the lie, I over mindful as of my iniquities, ever ready to publish my guilt, ever anxious as over my sin. And will they live, these enemies of mine, and still they as have the mastery; so many that bear me a grudge so wantonly, ever as resembling good with evil, and for the very righteousness of my cause wounding me. Do not fail me, O Lord my God, do not forsake me: hasten to as my deliverer, Lord God, my only refuge.

## PSALM 38

(14)

(To the end, the Melchior himself; a psalm of David.)

**I**T was my custom to live watchfully, and never was my tongue asleep; I still, while I was in the presence of sinners, I kept my mouth gagged, as dumb and patient that I would not speak even to good purpose. But indignation came back, and my heart buzzed within me, the fire kindled by my thoughts, so that at last I kept silence no longer.<sup>1</sup>

Lord, warn me of my evil, and how few my days are; teach me to know my own insufficiency. See how thou hast measured my years as with a span, how my life is nothing in thy reckoning! Nay, what is my span that lives, but nothingness? Truly man passes through the world like a shadow; with what vain industry he builds up riches, when he cannot tell who will have the counting of them. What hope then have I? What but despair, Lord? All that I am is thus done. Clear me of that manifold guilt which makes me the laughing-stock of fools, magnified and uncomplaining, because I know that my troubles as come from thee; spare me this punishment; I shelter under thy powerful hand. When thou dost chastise man for his sins with thy reproof, his life melts away like膏脂;<sup>2</sup> all he once cared for soon withers. God, Lord, is my prayer, let my cry reach thy hearing, and

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'I am ready to die.'

<sup>2</sup> It is not clear what is the connection between the two parts of this psalm.

<sup>3</sup> The words 'with thy reproof' are also to be taken as part of the preceding sentence. 'His life melts like膏脂'; in the Hebrew text, 'thou chastenest (directly, indirect) all the desire of his heart in a moment.'

my tears will answer. 'What am I in thy sight but a passer-by, a wanderer,  
as all my darkness wait? Give me some staying,<sup>1</sup> some cool breath of  
comfort, before I go away and am known no more.

## PSALM 39

(45)

<sup>2</sup> (To the end; a psalm for David himself.)

**P**ATIENTLY I waited for the Lord's help, and at last he turned  
his back towards me. He listened to my plea, drew me up out  
of a charcoal pit, where the snare had vented snags, and gave me a  
footstool on the rock, with firm ground to tread. He has framed a  
new music on my lips, a song of praise to our God, to fill all that sound  
by with reverence, and with trust in the Lord. Happy the man whose  
trust is thus bestowed, who pays no heed to false gods, and lying dreams.<sup>3</sup>  
O Lord my God, how long is the story of thy marvellous deeds! There  
is no wisdom like thy wisdom, Mine to proclaim it, mine to utter it, great  
beyond all our measuring. No sacrifice, no offering was thy demand;  
enough that thou hast given me an ear ready to listen. Thou hast not  
found any pleasure in burnt-offerings, in sacrifices for sin. See then,  
I said, I am coming to fulfil what is written of me, when the book lies  
unrolled;<sup>4</sup> to do thy will, O my God, is all my desire, to carry out that  
law of thine which is written in my heart. And I told the story of thy  
just dealings before a great throng; he witness, Lord, that I do not seal  
my lips. Thy just dealings are no secret hidden away in my heart; I  
boast of thy faithful protection, proclaim that mercy, the faithfulness of  
thine for all to hear it.  
Lord, do not withhold thy pity from me; thy mercy and faithfulness  
is that have ever been my shield. I am bound with evils past numbering,  
overcome by my sins; they fill my prospect, countless as the hairs on  
my head; my courage fails me. Delays, Lord, to set me free; Lord,  
give hand and help. Disappointments and shame be theirs, who lay plots

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew, 'Look away from me.'

<sup>2</sup> False gods and lying dreams: in the Hebrew text, 'the proud, and those who tell vain words.'

<sup>3</sup> vs. 7-8, Heb. 12, 3. 'Thou hast given me an ear ready to listen.' Literally, in the Latin, 'thou hast bestowed ears for me.' In the Hebrew text, this is 'thou hast provided ears for him.' But the Septuagint Greek has 'thou hast fitted a hearer for me,' and this is the form in which the Epistle to the Hebrews (12, 5) quotes the passage: 'Where the book thy unrolled?' Literally 'In the book part' (or, according to the Hebrew text, the volume) 'of the book.' This is often translated as the book of the Law; but the context suggests rather a metaphorical reference to David's own destiny (cf. Isa. 54, 16; 1 Kg. 19, 14).

against my life; let them sink away in confusion, my ill-wishers. Joy, O joy, is their cry now; no longer they will be whispering in their ears.<sup>1</sup> Rejoicing and triumph for all the souls that look to thee; Praise to the Lord, will ever be their song, who rejoice in thy saving power. I, so helpless, am so desolate, and the Lord is concerned for me! Thou art my champion and my refuge; do not forget, my God, do not forget, on the way.

## PSALM 40

(41)

(To the end; a psalm for David himself.)

**BLESSED** is that man who takes thought for the poor and the destitute; the Lord will keep him safe in time of trouble. May the Lord watch over him, and give him long life and happiness on earth, and break his enemies of their will. May the Lord sustain him when he lies bed-ridden; may there never give abundantly to the fevered.

Lord have mercy on me, is my prayer; being bound to a soul that has sinned against thee. Shortly my enemies await me. How long, they ask, ere he will die, and his name be forgotten? When one comes to visit me, he comes with smooth words, his heart full of malice ready to go out and plot against me in secret. There they stand, my enemies, talking of me in whispers, deriding my heart, rejoicing in their smothering ill-things now, but what is to prevent his making? Why, the very man I trusted most, my own intimate friend, who shared my bed, has lifted his heel to trip me up.<sup>2</sup> Lord, have mercy on me; give me back life, and let me rejoice them! Proof of thy favour, my enemies are boggled of their triumphs; thou dost baffle my innocence; a sinner with thou banish me from thy presence. Blasted be the Lord is God of Israel, from the beginning to the end of time, Amen, Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'let them quickly carry their own confusion'; in the Hebrew text, 'let them be despised because of their confusion.'

<sup>2</sup> 'Where is their malice?' the Hebrew text has 'his evil thing is poured into him (he perhaps, find upon him);' as part of what the commentator said, 'What is to prevent his making?' The sense of the Hebrew text is, 'shall he be allowed to rise up?' the Latin version is, 'express the same idea more strongly.'

<sup>3</sup> Jo. 13, 18.

## PSALM 41

(42)

(To the *nat*; of undetermined; for the sons of *Cora*.)

O GOD, my whole soul longs for thee, as a deer for running waters;  
 my whole soul thirsts for God, the strong, the living God; shall  
 I never again make my pilgrimage into God's presence? Morning  
 and evening, my diet still of tears! Daily I must listen to the taunt,  
 'Where is thy God now? Memories come back to me yet, musing the  
 hours, I am back at God's house, his majestic tabernacle, would the  
 rains of joy and thanksgiving, and all the noise of holiday? Soul, art  
 thou still downcast? Wilt thou never be at peace? Wait for God's help;  
 I will not cease to cry out in thankfulness, My champion and my God.  
 In my bed moved I will think of thee, here in this land of Jordan  
 and Horebore, on these wasted hills.<sup>1</sup> One depth makes answer to  
 another<sup>2</sup> until the roar of the floods thou smother, wave after wave,  
 crest after crest overwhelms me. Such rescue the Lord has shown, no  
 while day lasted; and here I no song for him, here in the night, no  
 a prayer to the God who is life for me? Thou art my stronghold, I will  
 tell him; hast thou never a thought for me? Must I go murmuring, with  
 a soulful, passing me hard; ruled by the careless terrors of my per-  
 secutors, Where is thy God now? Soul, art thou still downcast? Wilt thou  
 never be at peace? Wait for God's help; I will not cease to cry out in  
 thankfulness, My champion and my God.

<sup>1</sup> 'I am back at God's house, his majestic tabernacle'; this seems to be the sense of the Latin, referring to an exile's day-dreams. The Hebrew text is usually rendered, 'I passed on with the crowd, and led them to the house of God'; but the word translated 'crowd' is not found elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> The phrase seems to have taken root in its such from Jeremiah, living in the east of Jordan, at its northern end, on the foot-hills of the Hermon range. These low hills are described by a word which ordinarily expresses indignation, perhaps by way of contrasting them with more lofty.

<sup>3</sup> These 'depths' are evidently understood as being watery; but the second part of the verse would seem to be a metaphor derived from storms at sea. Cf. Job. 1.4.

<sup>4</sup> The exact sense here is doubtful, so is the exact pronunciation. But it looks as if 'day-dream' was used by a metaphor for the writer's former prosperity, and 'night' for his present unhappy condition.



## PSALM 42

(43)

(A psalm of David.)

**O** GOD, maintain my cause; give me redress against a man that  
 takes no pity, save me from a treacherous foe and friend. Thou,  
 O God, art all my strength: why hast thou cast me off? Why do I go  
 mourning, with enemies pressing me hard? The light of thy presence,  
 the fullness of thy promise, let them be my secret, bringing me  
 safe to thy holy mountain, to the tabernacle where thou dwellest.  
 There I will go up to the altar of God, the giver of youth and happiness;  
 thou art my God, with the harp I hymn thy praise. Soul, art thou  
 still downcast? Why thou never be at peace? Wait for God's help; I will  
 not cease to cry out in thankfulness, my champion and my God.<sup>1</sup>

## PSALM 43

(44)

(To the end; for the voice of Cane, for understanding.)

**O** GOD, this tale has come to our ears—have now our fathers said  
 of the great things thou didst in their time, in days long ago:  
 it was thy power that gave them a home by routing out the heathen,  
 crushing and dispersing nations before them. It was not by their  
 own sword that our fathers won the land, it was not their own strength  
 that brought them victory; it was the work of thy hand, thy strength,  
 thy smile shone upon them, in proof of thy favour. I am here as King,  
 so God, was that; it is thou that render deliverance to Israel. Though  
 there we show a bold front to our enemies<sup>2</sup> under thy protection we  
 seek little of their strength. Not in my bow I trust, not in my sword  
 I look for safety; it is thou that deliver us from our enemies, and convert  
 their malice with confusion. In God is all strength our heart, his name we  
 praise eternally.

And now? Now, O God, thou hast downcast us, and put us to shame, as  
 by refusing to go into battle with our armies. Thou dost put us to a  
 flight before our enemies; our ill-wishers plunder us as they will.  
 Thou hast made us like sheep sold for food, scattered here and there

<sup>1</sup> The expression *joy of the refuge* used in Psalm 42 makes it probable that  
 this too was originally a single psalm.

<sup>2</sup> "Show a bold front"; literally "like with our's horns."

- 11 among the heathen; thou hast turned away thy people without profit,  
 12 sitting on high, as seats for the high. Thou hast turned us into a laughing-  
 stock for our neighbours, ridiculed and derided by all who dwell around;  
 13 all the heathen make a by-word of us, and Gibeonites hiss their heads  
 14 at us in scorn. All day long my disgrace outflows as my cheeks  
 15 are covered with blushes, as I hear nothing but reproach and railing,  
 16 see none but jeering, none but persecution.  
 17 All this has come upon us, and it was not that we had forgotten thee.  
 18 We have not been untrue to thy covenant, or withdrawn our hearts  
 19 from thee, that thou shouldst let our steps wander away from thy  
 20 path.<sup>1</sup> Why hast thou brought us so low, with misery all around us?<sup>2</sup>  
 21 and the shadow of death hanging over us? If we had forgotten the  
 22 name of our own God, and spread out our hands to prayer to the gods  
 23 of the alien, would not he know it? He can read the secrets of men's  
 24 hearts. How is it, then, that we face death at every moment for thy  
 25 sake, refused so better than sheep marked down for slaughter? Forgive  
 26 thyself, Lord, why dost thou sleep on? Awake, do not baffle us from  
 27 thy presence for ever. How canst thou turn thy face away, without  
 28 a thought for our need and our affliction? Our guide is bowed to the  
 29 earth, prostrate, we cannot lift ourselves from the ground. Arise, Lord,  
 and help us; for thy honour's sake, chase us for thy own.

## PSALM 44

[43]

(To the end, for those who will be transformed; to the sons of Core,  
for understanding a song for a mass beloved.)

- 1 JOYFUL the thoughts that well up from my heart, the King's honour  
 2 for my theme; my tongue flows readily as the pen of a swift writer.  
 3 There is more than mortal beauty, thy lips overflow with graces  
 4 unnumbered; the blessings God has granted thee can never fail. Glad  
 5 on thy sword art thy ride, great warlike, glad thyself with all thy majesty  
 6 and all thy beauty; walk ready, ride on in triumph, and take thy crown,  
 7 in the name of truthfulness, and mercy, and justice. Thy own wonderful  
 8 deeds shall be thy passport;<sup>1</sup> so sharp are thy arrows, including nations  
 9 to thy will, arrows aimed at the hearts of the king's enemies. Thy

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'that our steps should wander away.'

<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'in a place of misery.'

<sup>3</sup> v. 5. 'Make ready'; literally, 'bind thy bow,' but the meaning here is uncertain. 'Take thy crown' (literally, 'crown') is not in the Hebrew text. At the end of the verse, the Hebrew text has, 'Thy right hand shall make thee terrible enemies.'

chance, O God, induces the ever and ever, the scepter of thy royalty is a rod that rules true;<sup>1</sup> thou hast been a shield to right, as money is to wrong, and God, thy own God, has given thee an unction to bring thou praise beyond any of thy fellows. Thy garments are scented with a myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, stored all now in ivory palaces, whence the daughters of kings have brought them as gifts to do thee honour.<sup>2</sup> At thy right hand stands the queen in a vesture of gold, all being about us with embroidery;<sup>3</sup> (listen, my daughter, and consider my words attentively; thou art to forget, henceforward, thy own nation, and the house of thy fathers; thy beauty, now, is all for the king's delight; as he is thy Lord and God,<sup>4</sup> and worship belongs to him.) The women of Tyre, too, will have their persons to bring; all that are rich among the princes will be courted thy favour. All her splendour is the splendour of a princess; through and through<sup>5</sup> so bedecked is she with embroidery, and wreaths of gold. Multitudes will follow in her train into the King's presence, all rejoicing, all triumphant; there come a princess of her, as they meet the king's palace! Thou shalt have sons worthy of thy own fathers, and divide a world between them for their domains. While time lasts, thy name will never be forgotten; nations will do thee honour, age after age, for ever.

## PSALM 44

(46)

(To the end, to the sons of Coer for hidden things; a psalm.)

**G**OD is our refuge and strength; bitter the trial that has overtaken us, but he can save. Rise for us to be shield, though earth should tumble about us, and the hills be carried away into the depths.

<sup>1</sup> 'Thy throne, O God,' various other ways of taking these words have been suggested. As, for example, 'God is [the support of] thy throne.' None of these has won wide acceptance. This verse and the following are applied to our Lord in the Epistle to the Hebrews (2:1).

<sup>2</sup> Both the interpretation of these words, and their division into sentences, has been the subject of dispute. Some think the Hebrew text should be rendered, 'Thy garments are scented with myrrh, aloes, and cassia; made from the ivory palaces whence they delight.'

<sup>3</sup> The words 'all being about us with embroidery' are not in the Hebrew text.

<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew text has simply 'thy Lord.'

<sup>5</sup> 'Through and through,' literally 'within,' a word sometimes used only of the interior of buildings. The rendering given above seems to represent the literal meaning of the Latin. The whole passage is very difficult, and some think that the word translated 'within' is a mistake for the word 'people,' which may have stood in the original text.

1 of the sea. See how the waters<sup>1</sup> rage and roar, how the hills tremble  
 2 before his might! But the city of God, enriched with deeply flowing  
 3 rivers, is the chosen sanctuary of the most High;<sup>2</sup> God dwells within her,  
 4 and she stands unmoved; come down,<sup>3</sup> he will grant her deliverance.  
 5 Nations may tremble, and thrones totter, earth shrank away before his  
 6 voice; but the Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.  
 7 Come near, and see God's acts, his marvellous acts done on earth  
 8 how he puts an end to war all over the world, the bow shivered, the  
 9 weapons shattered, the shields burst to shreds! Wait quietly, and you  
 10 shall have proof that I am God, claiming empire among the nations,  
 11 claiming empire over the world. The Lord of hosts is with us, the God  
 of Jacob is our refuge.

## PSALM 46

(47)

(To the end; for the sons of Cori; a psalm.)

1 CLAP your hands, Gentiles, in applause; acclaim your God with  
 2 voices of rejoicing. The Lord is high above us, and worthy of dread  
 3 he is the sovereign Ruler of all the earth; he has tamed the nations  
 4 to our will, bowed the Gentiles at our feet, claimed us for his own  
 5 portion, Jacob the fair, the well beloved. God goes up, lead us the  
 6 cries of victory; the Lord goes up, loudly the trumpets peal. A psalm,  
 7 a psalm for our God, a psalm, a psalm for our King! God is King  
 8 of all the earth, ponder well, the psalm you bring him. God reigns over  
 9 the heavens, Gods are enthroned in holiness. The rulers of the nations  
 10 gather before him, the God of Abraham most high in honour, powerful  
 lord<sup>4</sup> of the earth.

## PSALM 47

[48]

(A psalm of music for the sons of Cori on the second day of the week.)

1 THE Lord is great, great honour is his due here in the city where  
 2 he, our God, dwells, here on his holy mountain. Boldly stands  
 3 the Hill of Zion, the pride of the whole earth, where it slopes northward,  
 4 "To the Lord, our strength," as if the mountains round were moved by, but it

<sup>1</sup> "To the Lord, our strength," as if the mountains round were moved by, but it would appear from the Greek and the Hebrew that the waters surround the sea.

<sup>2</sup> There may be a reference here to II Sam. 5:4.

<sup>3</sup> Literally "very early in the morning" which verse may be intended if those who are right who connect this psalm with the defeat of Hiramoth (cf. IV Reg. 19, 32).

<sup>4</sup> Literally "great." The Hebrew text seems to mean "the ruler of the nations have been reduced to a people belonging to the God of Abraham; that before the shields of the earth he is greatly exalted." It is difficult to believe that either version fully represents the original.

the city of the great King: within these walls, God is made known in his protecting arm. Yea, lo, the kings of the earth have made common cause, and met there in arm! At the sight of her, all was bewilderment, and confusion, and dismay: fear took hold of them, sudden as the forces of a storm in travail: was not thine the power that wrode the coming-going slugs in the storm? Here, in this city of the Lord of hosts, the city of our own God, we have peered the tale long since, God has built her to endure for all eternity: abetted in his temple, we are sought and found deliverance. O God, whenever thy name is known on earth, thy praise is told, ever just in thy dealings; well may the hill of a lion rejoice, well may the women of Jeru triumph, in the devices which thou, Lord, hast executed. Walk about Zion, make the sound of her praises, and tell the story in each of them; mark well the defences that are our own, pass all her strongholds in review; then give the word to the next generation. Such is the God, who is our God for ever and ever; our Shepherd eternally!

## PSALM 48

(47)

(To the end, for the voice of Cithara, a psalm.)

**LISTEN**, ye nations far and wide; let all the world give hearing, ye lords of earth, and men nobly born, for rich and poor the same lesson. Here are wise words, thoughts of a discerning heart; make to yourselves inquiries, and reveal, with the harp's music, things of deep import.

What need have I to be afraid in troubled days, when nations do my wrath? and overthrow me, rulers of those who trust in their own strength and boast of their great possessions? What can brethren pay the penalty instead of brother? must not each pay his own? Men cannot buy God off, and give a ransom for his own life, so that he should be able to scheme on conditionally, live to eternity? and never meet death.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, the Hebrew text reads "Overt death," but there is some doubt of its genuineness.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'The wrong-doing of my wrath.' The sense of the Hebrew text is probably 'the misdeeds of those who neglect me.'

<sup>3</sup> The Latin here can also be translated, 'Brother cannot ransom brother; shall a man, then, be able to ransom himself?' The Hebrew text appears to mean, 'It is quite certain no man can ransom his brother,' which is simpler, but does not fit in well with the context.

<sup>4</sup> The Latin here can also be translated, 'His life is too precious a thing for God; he will labour for ever in vain, trying to find the ransom needed, even though he should live eternally.' This is contrary to the sense of the Hebrew text, which has 'he must give up that hope once and for all,' instead of 'he will labour for ever in vain.'

a True it is, wise men die, but reckless fools perish as they; their riches  
 c will go to others, and the grave will be their everlasting home. Genera-  
 cion will follow generation, and they will live on there, under the fields  
 c they have sowed their seed. Yet man, in his self-esteem, will not reflect  
 on what he is! March him with the brute beasts, and he is no better  
 than they.<sup>1</sup>

a Fools perish, that condemn both themselves and those who follow,  
 c trusting their advice! There they lie in the world beneath, saddled like  
 sheep, with death for their shepherd. By tomorrow's dawn, the just  
 will be triumphing over them; helpless, their riches fade away in the  
 a world beneath.<sup>2</sup> But my life God will rescue from the power of that  
 c lower darkness, a life that finds acceptance with him. Do not be dis-  
 turbed, then, when a man grows rich, and there is no end to his house-  
 c hold's magnificence; he cannot take it that with him when he dies.  
 c magnificence will not follow him to the grave. While life lasts, he  
 calls himself happy, and gives thanks to God, O God, for blessing  
 a him;<sup>3</sup> but soon he will be made one with the dust of his fathers, never  
 c again to see the light. Man, in his self-esteem, will not reflect on what  
 he is; march him with the brute beasts, and he is no better than they.

## PSALM 49

[35]

(A psalm of Asaph.)

IT is the Lord, the God of gods, that speaks: his message goes out  
 a over all the earth, from the sun's rise to its setting. Out of Zion,  
 c his perfect beauty, God comes, reverently he will keep silence no longer.  
 Before him goes a raging fire, there is a whirling storm round about  
 a him. So, from on high, he will summon heaven and earth to witness  
 a the judgment pronounced on his people. Master in his power  
 his faithful servants, who breathe his constant still with sacrifice.

<sup>1</sup> vs. 12 (also v. 21). 'Man, in his self-esteem, will not reflect on what he is!' The meaning of the Hebrew text is, 'The foolish men among will not last.'

<sup>2</sup> In verse 21-22 the Latin can also be rendered, 'He cannot grasp the meaning of death though he sees that' die. Instead of 'the grave' read 'the everlasting home.' Acc., the Hebrew text seems to read, 'their inheritance though it is, that their houses will last for ever, that their heirs' slaves will go on from generation to generation, and so they will sow fields for their own names.'

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew text possibly means, 'their servants there will be a joy to the world beneath, and have no habitation left for it!' but the expression is awkward, and it seems likely that the text reading has been lost.

<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew text reads, 'and men will praise thee (that is, the rich, though they must be warning for others warning).'

The heathen themselves pronounce him just, God who is our Judge, who listens, my people, to their words of sin, listen, Israel, to the assurance: I give them, I, the God whom cannot as God. I do not find fault with them over thy sacrifice; why, all day long thy burnt-offerings trouble before me. But the gifts I accept are not cattle from thy stock, nor a buck-goat from thy folds; I even slay every wild beast in the forest, as every dove and bird on the hills; I know every bird that flies in heaven; as mine is all the pasture of the fields.\* If I am hungry, I will not complain of it to thee, I, who am master of earth and all that earth contains. Wouldst thou have me eat bull's flesh, and drink the blood of a goat? The sacrifice thou must offer to God is a sacrifice of praise, as with thee perform thy vows to the most High. So, when thou criest to me in time of trouble, I will deliver thee; then thou shalt honour me as thou wilt.

But thou, to the slayer, God speaks: How is it that thou canst repeat as thy commendation by rote, and boast of my covenant with thee, and as thou, all the while, hast no love for the amendment of thy ways, casting every warning of mine to the wind? Swift thou art to welcome the thief who crosses thy path, to share in thy lot with the robbers. Malice wells up from thy lips, and thy tongue is a ready engine of a deceit; thou wilt sit there in confidence, speaking evil of thy brother, as plotting against thy own mother's son. Such were thy ways, and I made it no sign, till the wicked thought came to thy heart that I was such as thou art. Here is thy reward here is thy inheritance made plain to thee. Think well on this, you that forget God, or his hand will fall on suddenly, and there will be no delivering you. He rescues me truly, as who offers me a sacrifice of praise; there lies your path, who would not the saving power of God.

## PSALM 55

(51)

(To the end; a psalm of David, on the occasion of Nathan's coming to approach him for his adultery with Bathsheba.)

**H**AVE mercy on me, O God, as thou art ever rich in mercy; in the abundance of thy compassion, blot out the record of my iniquities. Wash me clean, cleanse me, from my guilt, purge me of my sin, the guilt which I deeply acknowledge, the sin which is above me:

\* The writer's style is probably a mistake in the Greek, owing to the use in Hebrew of a very rare word, which refers to some (unidentified) class of animal creation.

a but to my sight. Then only my sins have offended; thou wast the  
 witness of my wrongdoing; thy warnings were deserved, and if thou  
 a art called in question, thou hast right on thy side. For indeed, I was  
 born in sins; guilt was with me already when my mother conceived  
 a me. But thou art ever faithful to thy promises; and now, in deep penitence,  
 a thy wisdom has instructed me. Thou wilt sprinkle me with a wind  
 of hyssop, and I shall be clean; washed, I shall be whiter than snow;  
 a a message thou wilt send me of good news and rejoicing, and the belly  
 that lies in the dust shall thrill with pride.

a Turn thy eyes away from my sins, blot out the record of my guilt;  
 a my God, bring a clean heart to birth within me; breathe new life, true  
 a life, into my being. Do not banish me from thy presence, do not take  
 a thy holy spirit away from me; give me back the comfort of thy saving  
 a power, and strengthen me in gracious mercy. So will I teach  
 the wicked to follow thy paths, sinners shall come back to thy statutes.  
 a My God, my divine Deliverer, save me from the guilt of bloodshed!  
 a Thy tongue shall boast of thy mercies. O Lord, thou wilt open my  
 a lips, and my mouth shall tell of thy praise. If thou, indeed, a sinner  
 a dost, forgive! I would have given thee, but thou takest no pleasure  
 a in burnt-offerings: the sacrifice God loves is a broken spirit; a heart  
 a that is humbled and contrite thou, O God, wilt never disdain. Lord,  
 a in thy great love send prosperity to Zion, so that the walls of Jerusalem  
 a may be built.<sup>1</sup> Then indeed thou wilt take pleasure in solemn sacrifices,  
 a in gift and burnt-offering; then indeed, bullocks will be laid upon  
 thy altar.<sup>2</sup>

## PSALM 31

(32)

a (To the end. Of understanding, for David; when Dong, the Ethiopian,  
 came and told David, David went into Achish's house.)

a **W**HILE thou takest pride, triest, in thy own wisdom, in thy own  
 a ill-doing, all the long day? Thy tongue is skilled in mischief,  
 a thy mind eager-edged for treachery. Craftily, never blindfold, is thy  
 a study, guile, never honest speech, will thy false lips love the word

<sup>1</sup> It seems certain that David built a great part of the fortress of Jerusalem (Josephus, *Antiquities*, VII. 11. 3). But some scholars think that there had two verses were added to the original psalm, after the capture of Jerusalem by the king of Babylon.

<sup>2</sup> If this verse is part of the original psalm, it seems to imply that the sacrifice of bulls, though of no avail in expiation for grievous sin (verse 13), was a legitimate form of thanksgiving sacrifice. (Cf. Ps. 42-43.)

<sup>3</sup> The words "all the long day" may be omitted, and it: what goes before, but it: what follows.



that brings men to ruin. And will not God destroy them utterly, cast  
 thee up, drive thee from thy home, till thy track is known among  
 living men no more? Honest folk will watch, and wonder, and trust  
 him then: So much like the man who would have none of God's help,  
 but relied on his store of riches, and found his strength in vain hope! And if  
 I stood like a fruitful olive-tree in the house of my God, I will  
 trust for ever and for ever in his divine mercy: I will give thee eternal  
 thanks for all thou hast done, and put my trust in thy name, as they ever  
 love to do, that are thy true servants.

## PSALM 52

(53)

(To the end, for Mithch. Of understanding, for David.)

**T**HERE is no God above us, is the thought of restless hearts. Wicked  
 men are everywhere, and evil wrong done; there is not an innocent  
 man among them. God looks down from heaven at the race of men, to  
 find one soul that reflects, and goes in search for him; but no, all have  
 missed the mark and disappointed him; a life well lived is nowhere to be  
 found. What, can they learn nothing, all these traffickers in iniquity, who  
 feed themselves fit on this people of mine, as if it were bread for their  
 eating, and never invoke God's name? What wonder if fear assails them,  
 where they have no cause for fear? Man's friends, God's foes, they fall  
 back amazed,<sup>1</sup> and he has widened their homes far and wide. Oh, may  
 thou bring deliverance to Israel! Day of gladness for Jacob, day of Israel's  
 triumph, when God brings his called people home!

## PSALM 53

(54)

(To the end among the songs; of understanding, for David. Upon  
 the occasion when the men of Gibe told Saul that David was in hiding  
 among them.)

**L**ORD, by the virtue of thy name deliver me, let thy sovereign  
 power give me order; give a hearing, Lord, to my plea; let  
 me speak, and know thou art listening. Alas how vain men against

<sup>1</sup> vs. 1-7. See notes on Ps. 37. In the first version to the new Psalter, this  
 was met "God" where the earlier psalm uses "the Lord," but otherwise there  
 is no substantial variation except in verse 4.

<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew text, "they assailed against thee." Some think that this  
 verse was inserted to address the destruction of Shechemite's army (IV Kg.  
 23:20).

me, strong men that grudge me life back, with no thought of God  
 to check them. Ah, but God is here to help me; the Lord has my safety  
 in his keeping. Let the blow reach on my persecutors even faithful to  
 thy word, do thou overthrow them. So will I joyfully offer thee sacrifice,  
 and praise thy name, Lord, as praised it must be, that hast so delivered  
 me from all peril, and let me see the downfall of my enemies.

## PSALM 34

(55)

(To the end among the songs. Of understanding, for David.)

GIVE audience to my prayer, O God; do not spurn this plea of  
 mine; hear and grant relief. I am spent with anxiety, beset  
 by the outcry of my enemies, by the malice which persecutes me; their  
 sidelong strokes of injury, their spiteful rage against me. My heart is  
 full of whirling thought; the fear of death stands over me, trembling and  
 terrified, I watched the darkness closing about me. Had I but wings,  
 I cry, as a dove has wings, to fly away, and find rest! How distant would  
 my journey be, how long I would remain there, out in the wilderness!  
 Vainly I wait for rescue from the fears that clutch me; from the storm  
 around me.

Flung them deep, Lord, in ruin, bring destruction into their council  
 Do I not see, already, violence and sedition in the city? Do not eat  
 wrong salt about the walls of it night and day, do not misery and  
 crime occupy its streets? Oppression and treason are ever busy in  
 its streets. Had it been some enemy that despoiled me, I could have  
 borne it patiently; some open仇讐, I could have stiffened myself  
 from his blows. But thou, who hast known my thoughts, my secrets,  
 my familiar mind! How pleasant was the feast when we shared it,  
 thou and I; how lovingly we walked together in the house of God! May  
 death overtake them, may the abyss swallow them up alive, their bones,  
 their hearts so stained with evil!

Still I will call upon God, and the Lord will save; still at evening  
 and morn and noon I will cry aloud and make my plea before him  
 will not be deaf to my appeal. He will win my soul peace, will rescue  
 me from their onset, though so few among many take my part.<sup>1</sup> Hail,

<sup>1</sup> From the fears that clutch me; in the Hebrew text, 'from the winging wind.'<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'We both pleasant converse together, and walked together into God's house with the singing of psalms.'<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'among many they were with me.' The Hebrew text is generally construed as meaning, 'those against me amounted to many,' but the phrase is strained.

the God who signed before time was, will learn to me, will bring them low. So long unpunished,<sup>1</sup> they have had no fear of God; his hand is raised, now, to do justice. They violated his covenant, and so will his wrath be hidden from them, but his heart watched them narrowly; his words were as gentle, they soothed like oil, but in truth they are weapons of destruction.<sup>2</sup> Cast the burden of thy sins upon the Lord, and he will pardon thee; never will he let thee stumble, his presence if thou be. These, O God, thou wilt sink in a pit of ruin: the blood-thirsty, the cravenhearted, will not live out half their days; but I, Lord, will put my trust in thee.

## PSALM 55

(56)

(To the end, for the people which is far removed from God's faithful servants. For David, for the inscription of a monument, when the Philistines held him prisoner in Geth.)

**H**AVE mercy on me, O God, downcasted evenmore by man's cruel oppressions; evenmore my enemies tread me under foot, so many there are to make war upon me. Day is no access up,<sup>3</sup> then terror surround me, but I will still put my confidence in thee; I have alack of God's help, My trust is in God, no mortal design can do me harm. Enemies they than my converse, have no thought but for my undoing. Ill neighbours,<sup>4</sup> that hide their thoughts from me, watching my steps as they plot against my life! So worthless,<sup>5</sup> and with them

<sup>1</sup> This is probably the sense of the Latin, and certainly of the Septuagint Greek. But it would be possible to render, either from the Hebrew or from the Latin, 'they never alter their ways.'

<sup>2</sup> vs. 21, 22. The Greek and Latin readings here differ greatly from the Hebrew text, which perhaps gives a better sense, though it involves much confusion of persons. It appears to mean, 'His (the enemy) smites his hand against one who is at peace with him, in violation of the covenant between them; his speech is smooth as honey, whose thoughts of war were in his heart.' So, 'They are weapons of destruction,' in that case, will refer to the enemy's words. The Latin version, translated above, has the advantage that 'he' refers to God, and 'they' to the enemy, in verse 21 and in verse 22. 'His words,' that is, God's commandments, which are urged upon us persuasively, but bring destruction if they are disobeyed. 'His wrath was hidden from them' may also be rendered, 'they were ignored by his wrath.'

<sup>3</sup> Literally 'from the height of the day.' The meaning of the Hebrew text here is uncertain.

<sup>4</sup> This is probably the sense of the Latin, and certainly of the Septuagint Greek. The Hebrew text is better translated, 'they gather themselves together.'

<sup>5</sup> i. e. Literally 'to render for their nothingness.' The Hebrew text here, 'to render for their dishonour.'

be their posterity? Those, who dare bring nations to ruin when they are angry? No, indeed; my life has no secret from thee, my God; no one of mine but is recorded in thy sight; faithful is thy promise,<sup>1</sup> and my enemies will turn their backs when I call upon thee; I know a well that thou, God, art on my side. This is the weakness of my heart in God, the burden of my song of triumph to the Lord. My trust is in God, man's designs cannot defeat me. The rock which I thou claimed from me, O God, my praise shall fulfil. Hast thou not saved my life from every peril, my feet from every slip? And shall I not enjoy God's favour, while the light of life is with me?

## PSALM 35

(17)

(To the end; do not destroy. For David, for the description of a moment, on the occasion when he took refuge in a cave at the approach of Saul.)

**I** HAVE mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me; here is a soul that puts its trust in thee; I will take refuge under the shadow of thy wings, and let tyranny pass me by. I will cry out to the most high God, the God who has ever befriended me, ever sent aid from heaven to deliver me, and thrown my oppressors into confusion. His mercy, his faithfulness came to my aid; rescued me from a very den of lions, where I dined with fear;<sup>2</sup> from the bear breed, whose curious tooth bites deeper than spear or arrow, whose tongue is sharp as a sword. O God, mount high above the heavens, all thy glory overshadows the whole earth. See where they have laid a snare for my feet, to bring me low, dug a pit in my path, and fallen into it themselves! A heart to serve thee, my God, a heart ready to serve thee; the song, the music art for thee! 'Wake, all my skill,'<sup>3</sup> wake, exhaust me of harp and viol; down shall find me watching: so will I give thee thanks, Lord, for all the world to hear is, sing praise while the Gentiles sit firm, of thy mercy, high as heaven itself, of thy faithfulness, that reaches to the clouds. O God, mount high above the heavens, all thy glory overshadows the whole earth.

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text has 'my watching' instead of 'my life,' and 'recorded in thy crown' instead of 'recorded in thy sight.' Some would connect the words 'faithful is the promise' with what goes before, rather than with what follows.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'I slept in confusion.' The Hebrew text means to sleep. 'I lay down amidst flaming ones,' the original reading has perhaps been lost.

<sup>3</sup> 'All my skill,' literally, 'my glory,' a term by which the psalmist sometimes refers to himself, e.g., 79:15.

## PSALM 37

(58)

(To the end; do not destroy. For David, for the inscription of a monument.)

AND are your thoughts indeed honest thoughts? If you would but **A** ridge uprightly, have bread of man? See how you devise treachery in your hearts, cover the land with a web of opposition! Sinners that left the world's only to go a-straying; renegades and then their mothers bore them! They are venomous as serpents, as the asp that turns a deaf ear and will not listen to the snake-charmer's music, malignant and selfish as a snake though he be. And now God will break their cruel fangs; the Lord will shatter their jaws, strong as the jaws of lions. They will vanish away like split straw; when he bends his bow, they will be perfection before him. They will melt like wax,<sup>1</sup> one touch of the flame, and they will see the sun no more; the flame will burn them alive, like young thorns that grew late a thicker sward.<sup>2</sup> The innocent man will triumph at the sight of their punishment, as he dips his hands in the blood of the evil-doer; Sure enough, man will say, innocency has its reward, sure enough, there is a God who grants redress here on earth.

## PSALM 38

(59)

(To the end; do not destroy. For David, for the inscription of a monument, on the occasion when Saul had his house watched, to see to kill him.)

**O** GOD, deliver me from my enemies, rescue me from their snaring; shew their treacherous designs, shatter their last hope for blood. See how they have taken me at a disadvantage, surrounding all their strength to overwhelm me! Yet never, Lord, through any fault or offence of mine

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text in the first half of the verse is doubtful; some think that the oppositives are addressed by a name which may mean either 'judges' or 'goats.'

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text is usually rendered, 'like a stalk,' but it is difficult to see in what sense.

<sup>3</sup> The verse appears to be, that the saplings will be cut off while they are still vigorous, like young thorns which are consumed by a frost fire before they have turned firm the withered stalks commonly used for the binding-wood of fig. 2-45). The literal sense of the Latin is, That as they are alive, so is (or so) will devour them eagerly, before your thorns have ever undimmed (what it was to be) a sturdy-bush. The word 'thorn' is probably a mistake for 'you,' which is found in the Septuagint Greek. The Hebrew text is equally curious; the Hebrew word rendered 'thorns' in the Latin is usually given the sense of 'binding-wood.'

- 1 I have kept steadily on my way,<sup>1</sup> doing injury to no man. Iniquity should come to my side and witness my wrongs; Lord, God of hosts, God of Israel, break thee, with mankind, and shew the sinners no mercy.  
 2 See them come back as night-fell, like hungry dogs,<sup>2</sup> to prowel about the city! Ha! ha! how those cruel tongues lisp out their venom! They think no one can hear them, and all the while thou, Lord, hasten light of them, thou, in whose esteem all the nations are as nothing.  
 3 In thee evermore I find my stronghold, the God who upholds me;<sup>3</sup>  
 4 the God whose love sustains me on the way, the God who bids me triumph over my enemies. Not for their destruction I pray; should my evil people be lost to man's remembrance? Only let thy power dispense them; crush them down, my protector, my deliverer!<sup>4</sup> Down with the guileful tongues, the bawling lips; let their own pride ensnare them; let their swelling and lies mark them out for defeat; thy vengeance will defeat them, and bring their power to an end. Show them that there is a God who rules over Jacob, rules over the woman snare of his people.<sup>5</sup> Ha! ha! how they are night-fell, like hungry dogs, and prowel about the city: far and wide they will roam in search of their prey, and roar with rage when they go unaided at last.<sup>6</sup> And I, as long, will be thanking thee for thy protection, will be triumphing in the mercy thou hast shown a man, thou, my stronghold and my refuge in the time of peril. To thee I will sing, the God who delivers, the God who upholds me, my God, and all my hope of mercy.

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'they rise about and make themselves ready.'

<sup>2</sup> 'Hungry dogs' in the Hebrew text, 'bawling dogs.'

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew text is usually rendered, 'O my deliverer, I will wait for thee,' but some think we should read 'I will sing a psalm to thee,' as in verse 18 below.

<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew text may also be rendered, 'Do not slay them, but my people forget it,' but the thought seems difficult to follow. The Septuagint Greek has, 'but they forget my law'; the Hebrew may, and the Latin must, be translated, 'but they (scandalously) should forget my people,' i.e., but this wholesale destruction should demonstrate the futility of Israel's litigation.

<sup>5</sup> vs. 13, 14. The Hebrew text appears to mean, 'With the coming and the going would they utter. Destroy them in thy vengeance, destroy them.'

<sup>6</sup> vs. 15, 16. The enemies of the Psalms, who are parcelling the city to keep him in, will find that he has escaped, and will be scattered (as in verse 18) far and wide in their disappointed search for him.

## PSALM 59

[59]

(To the end, for those who will be transformed; for the inscription of a musician, for David himself, with a view to instruction. On the evening when he was laying waste Syria of the two rivers, and Soba; and Joab turned back and defeated the Philistines, neither exhausted wrong, in the valley of Soba.)

**T**OO long, O God, hast thou chastened us and taken toll of us, none, instead of anger thou shewest mercy. Heal the wounds of the land; thou hast shaken and torn arable, the land that trembles still. Grief's nights thou hast made us witness, such a drought thou didst brew for us as made our waters dry. But now thou hast set up a standard to rally thy faithful servants, and to protect them from the archers' snare; now bring aid to the man thou lovest, give my prayer answer, and lift thy right hand to save.

God's word came to us from his sanctuary, I mean to divide up Sichern, and parcel out the valley of Terebinth, as our Gilead, to me; Manasse's holdings Ephraim is my inheritance, Judah loves my commands; as Manasse, our day, shall be a vessel in my service; I will cast out my foes over them to claim possession, the Philistines will bow before me.<sup>1</sup> Such was the oracle; but now who is to lead me on my march against this Gath, who is to find an entrance for me into Edom, when thou, O God, hast chastened us, and wilt not go into battle with our enemies? It is thou that shalt deliver us from guilt; vain is the help of man. Only through God can we fight victoriously; only be our temple our oppression in the day.

## PSALM 60

[60]

(To the end, among the hymns for David.)

**L**ISTEN, Lord, to this cry of appeal; do not let my prayer go unheeded, though it be from the ends of the earth that I call upon thee. Full of mingling was my heart, but thou hast set me high up

<sup>1</sup> Literally 'thou hast given a sign to those who fear thee, that they should escape from the presence of the foe.' Probably the 'sign' is meant to be a miracle, as in the Hebrew some would read 'word' instead of 'sign' in the Hebrew text, and interpret the second half of the sentence differently.

<sup>2</sup> *vs.* 1-10. This would seem to be a quotation from some old prophecy, referring to the conquest of Chanaan. For 'cast out my foes,' cf. *Isa.* 49.

1 on a rock, thou hast rescued me on my way, thou, my only hope,  
 2 my strong tower against the wrath of my enemies. Oh let me dwell  
 3 for ever in thy tabernacle, let me take refuge under the shadow of thy  
 4 wings! Lord, thou hast listened to my prayer, thou hast given thy  
 5 worshippers a home to dwell in. Year upon year thou wilt add to the  
 6 king's reign, while generations come and go, his life will last. He  
 7 will stand firm for ever in the presence of God, the God whose mercy  
 8 and faithfulness are beyond all reckoning.<sup>1</sup> Eternally I will sing thy  
 praises, day after day perform my vows.

## PSALM 61

(62)

(To the end; for lifting up a psalm of David.)

1 MY soul, do not leave thyself in God's hands: in him I look for  
 2 deliverance. I have no other God, no other deliverer but him;  
 3 ask in his presence, I fear no deadly fall. Still one owns my enemies  
 4 single out for their murderous attack, all except one way, like cattle  
 5 at God's gap or wall's breach.<sup>2</sup> Still I must go on unscathed,<sup>3</sup> while  
 6 their schemes to destroy me, none that once used to speak me fair, but  
 7 ever with a curse in their hearts. Yet even now, my soul, have thyself in  
 8 God's hands: all my trust is in him. He is my God and my deliverer, my  
 9 protector, hiding me sound unmoved. God is all my defence and all my  
 10 boast; my help, my hope come from God. Therefore now and all, put your  
 11 confidence in him, and lay the homage of your hearts at his feet; God is  
 12 our defence for ever.  
 13 Adam is but supplanter, light weighs the sins of Adam as false coin in  
 14 the scales; vain are all their enterprises to deceive.<sup>4</sup> Hope no more for

<sup>1</sup> It is not clear, in the Latin, whether the mercy and faithfulness referred to are those of God, or those of the king; the former explanation seems more likely, since David himself is traditionally the author of the psalm. The Hebrew text has, 'against thy wrath and thy faithfulness in his presence.'

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'How long do you rush upon a man? You are all murderers, as if in a hunting forest or a barren wast.' It is not clear, either in the Hebrew or in the Latin, how the words like a 'hunted wild' or a 'barren-land deer' are to be fitted into the grammar of the sentence. It is perhaps wiser to think of the Psalmist's enemies as compared to a herd of cattle, seeking for a gap in a wall or hedge.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'glorious.' This is probably a calumnious rendering of the Septuagint Greek, 'they run as blind,' and a corrupt reading for 'they run in blindness,' which, however, as the Hebrew text should be 'they take pleasure in blindness.'

<sup>4</sup> In the Hebrew text this verse reads as one, 'The sins of Adam are supplanters, the sins of man are but a thorn; they are high, for very supplanter, in the scales.'



wroughtful pains, sigh for plunder no more; on mounting mass of riches set never your hand. Not once, but twice I have heard God's voice of us whispering all praise to God's. To thee, Lord, mercy belongs; thou wilt us enjoy mercy more the reward of his deeds.

## PSALM 42

(63)

(A psalm of David, composed when he was in the desert of Edgah.)

**O** GOD, thou art my God; to thee at dawn I keep vigil, body and soul :  
 attain for thee, a hundred ways, in this parched, this trackless :  
 wilderness! See, I have made pilgrimages to thy sanctuary, some of thy  
 great acts, some of thy glory! To win thy mercy is dearest to me than  
 his food; my songs of praise can no more be withheld. So all my life :  
 long, I will bless thee, holding up my hands in homage of thy name; my  
 heart filled, as with some rich fruit, my mouth, in joyful accents, singing  
 thy praise. My thoughts shall go out to thee at dawn, as I lie awake :  
 remembering thee, and the protection thou hast given me. Gladly I :  
 take shelter under thy wings, cling close to thee, borne up by thy pre-  
 serving hand. In vain do my enemies plot against my life, soon to be :  
 rendered up in the depths of earth, a prey to the sword, carried for :  
 a trophy! The king shall triumph in God's protection, blessed as they are :  
 over blessed who take their refuge in his name;<sup>1</sup> silence shall fall on the  
 lips that muttered treason.

## PSALM 43

(64)

(To the end, a psalm of David.)

**O** GOD, listen to my prayer when I call for aid, save me from the :  
 throned of my mortal foe. Thine is delivered me from this con- :  
 spiracy of sinners, this throng of evil-doers; the tongue that would lie :  
 a sharpened sword, the bitter hatred aimed at me, like a bow ready bent.  
 Stealthily they shoot their arrows at the innocent suddenly, from a safe :  
 vantage-point, they wound him. See them pledged to an infamous :  
 motive, plotting to lay snares for me, sure that they will go unscathed. With :  
 what care they hatch their treason, redoubled care that defeat in pur-

<sup>1</sup> On the meaning may be, 'all who trust in the King's name shall be blessed.'

- 1 ponder! Let man's thoughts be deep as they will, yet God must triumph;  
 2 their arrows do no more harm than children's toys, and all their con-  
 3 spiring plots than fables. A sight to strike men with amazement, and fill  
 4 their hearts with dread; who but will ascribe God's power, who but will  
 5 ponder His great acts? Humble men will rejoice and put their trust in the  
 6 Lord; upright hearts will find their recompense.

## PSALM 64

(65)

(To the end, a psalm of David. A song made by Jeremy and Ezekiel for the people of the exile, when they began their return journey.)

- 1 O GOD, thou that yet hast praise in Zion Jerusalem shall yet pay  
 2 her vows to thee. Listen to my prayer, thou to whose all solicited  
 3 must look for pardoning; and though the cause of the wicked has prevailed  
 4 against us, a sinful people to thy favour return. Blessed the man to  
 5 whom thy choice falls, whom thou taltest to dwell with thee in thy ever  
 6 decanted Thy house has treasures to content our hearts; holy is thy  
 7 temple, wonderful in its ordered worship. Listen to us, O God our  
 8 Saviour; at the bounds of earth, far over the sea, is thou we hope.<sup>1</sup>

- 9 What power girds thee about Thy strength bids the mountains stand  
 10 firm, rises up the depths of the sea,<sup>2</sup> and sets its billows roaring; thy  
 11 portents fill the heathen with dismay, strike terror at the world's end.  
 12 All the lands of sunrise and sunset with rejoicing. And now thou hast  
 brought relief to this land of ours, hast returned and greatly enriched it.

- Deep flows the stream whence thy divine providence grants us food;  
 13 long time thou dost prepare it. Make earth's channels dance, make its  
 14 fountains abound with the showers that fall on it, till it blossoms forth joy-  
 15 ously.<sup>3</sup> So thou wilt bless us with plenty, to crown the year; the fields,  
 16 a through thee, will be thick with harvest, the fair desert pastures will  
 17 be true riches, and the hill-sides be gaily clad. No flock but will boast of

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'they have sinned through scheming with scoundrels.' In the Hebrew text, the meaning seems to be 'they have failed their casual search.'

<sup>2</sup> This verse, in the Hebrew text, begins: 'Thou, in thy righteousness, dost answer our prayer with terrible portents. O God our Saviour,' perhaps with a reference to the plagues of Egypt.

<sup>3</sup> 'Rises up' is 'rills,' according to the Hebrew text.

<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew text has, 'thou dost water its furrows, and smooth out its ridges: thou dost sowing it with showers, and bless its crops: the following sentence begins 'thou dost crown the year with plenty.'

its rain's fleece, no valley but will stand deep in corn; the shout of joy everywhere, everywhere the hymns of praise.

## PSALM 65

[56]

(To the tune: a psalter-song of resurrection.)<sup>1</sup>

LET the whole world keep holiday in God's presence, sing praise  
 1 as his name, pay homage to his glory! Cry out to God, What dread,  
 2 Lord, thy acts inspire! How great is that might of thine, which makes  
 the oceans cringe before thee! Let the whole earth worship thee, sing  
 4 of thee, sing praises to thy name. Come near, and see what God does,  
 how wonderful he is in his dealings with human kind, how he turns the  
 sea into land, and lets men cross a river dry-shod; ours to rejoice in his  
 mercy. In that power of his he judges far-ones, and has eyes for what the  
 5 Gentiles do; let rebellious souls name their pride. Bless the name of our  
 God, ye Gentiles, echo the sound of his praise.

God's will is I should live you; he does not allow my steps to falter.<sup>1</sup>  
 2 You, Lord, thou hast put us in the pool, treaded us as men tread silver in  
 the fire; led us into a snare, and bowed our backs with trouble, while  
 3 we human sinners rode us down; our way led through fire and waste, but  
 now thou hast brought us out into a place of repose. See, I come here thy  
 4 house with burnt-offerings, to pay thee all the vows: their lips have  
 formed, this mouth has uttered, when trouble came upon me. For burnt-  
 5 offerings shall be thine, and the words of man's flesh, bullocks and goats  
 shall be thy sacrifice. Come and give ear, all you who worship God, while  
 6 I tell of the great wonders he has shown me; how this voice of mine cried  
 out to him, this tongue did him honour. Would God listen to me, if my  
 7 eyes were set as towers? And God has listened to me, given heed to my  
 cry for succour. Blessed be God, who does not reject my prayer, does not  
 withhold his mercy from me.

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text has 'we should live' and 'our steps.'

## PSALM 66

(67)

(To the end, in hymns; a psalm-song of David.)

1 **MAY** God be merciful to us, and bless us; may he smile graciously  
 2 **on** us, and shew us his mercy. Make known thy will,<sup>1</sup> O God,  
 3 wide as earth make known among all nations thy saving power. Honour  
 4 to thee, O God, from the nations, honour from all the nations! The  
 5 Gentiles, too, may rejoice and be glad; the whole earth shew thy  
 6 judgment, and the Gentiles, too, obey thy sovereignty. Honour to  
 7 thee, O God, from the nations, honour from all the nations! The earth  
 8 has yielded its harvests: may God, our own God, bless us; may God  
 9 grant his blessing, and may earth, far and wide, do him reverence.

## PSALM 67

(68)

(To the end. For David; a psalm to be sung.)

1 **LET** God hear himself now, and now his enemies, confound his ill-  
 2 willers and put them to flight. Let the wicked vanish at upbraid-  
 3 ings, consumed by God's presence, as the war melts at the presence  
 4 of fire, while honest men keep holiday and rejoice at the sight of him, glad  
 5 and content. Sing, then, in God's houses, praise his name with a psalm:  
 6 a royal progress for the God whose throne is the sunset, whose name is  
 7 **Jehovah**. Triumph in his presence; let the wicked tremble at his frown; he  
 8 is a father to the orphan, and gives the widow refuge, this God who  
 9 dwells apart is holiness. This is the God who unites in peace the  
 10 families that were scattered,<sup>2</sup> brings the prisoners back in the flower  
 11 of their manhood; the widows, too, that lacked in harvests among the hills.  
 12 O God, when thou shalt go forth at the head of thy people, as that  
 13 royal progress of thine through the desert, how the earth shook, how  
 14 the sky broke at God's coming, how even **Sinai** shook, when the God of  
 15 Israel came! And on this thy own head, O God, thou wastest rain to be  
 16 a mark of thy favour; all parched in love, and thou dost bring it forth.  
 17 All living things that dwell in it are thy prisoners; in kindly, O God,  
 18 is the parching thou hast made for the poor.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, in the Latin, 'that we may know thy will'; but this variation from the Hebrew and the Greek interrupts the world-wide scope of the psalm.

<sup>2</sup> 'Thou hast in peace the families that were scattered': the Hebrew text more probably means 'Thou hast made people here heads of households.' In the rest of this verse, the Hebrew text is generally read as meaning that God leads back prisoners into prosperity, while the nations are left in the wilderness.

Here are bringers of good news, with a message the Lord has given to them, from the way he leads:<sup>1</sup> a king, leading the armies of a beloved or people, a people how well beloved! He bids the frontiers of his court divide the spoil between them. Live at peace in the midst of your inheritance, and riches shall be yours like the silver that covers the dove's wings, like the stems of gold on its back. He who dwells in a house has stored the ground with the wealth of kings, like the snow that lies white on Salomon.<sup>2</sup> God's mountain, how fearful it is, how rugged, yet how fearful it is! What need to look up anxiously at the enormous heights? It is this mountain God has chosen for his dwelling-place; on this mountain the Lord will dwell for ever.<sup>3</sup>

See where God comes, with chariots innumerable for his escort; in thousands triumph with him; the Lord is their leader, as at Sinai, so here on his holy mountain.<sup>4</sup> Thou dost mount up on high, thou dost capture thy spoil, and men must pay thee tribute; the heathen must make way for the Lord God to dwell in their midst.<sup>5</sup> Blessed be the Lord now and for ever, the God who protects us, and prosper our journey. Our God is a God of deliverance; Levi is a Lord who saves from peril of death. God will unite the heads of his enemies, unite the proud leaders of the more or who live at ease in their wilderness. I will restore my people, the Lord is

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew, the bringers of good news are women; it is not clear what is the meaning of the word 'king,' or the end of the sentence.

<sup>2</sup> In verses 13-15 the sense of the Latin text can only be guessed at; the Hebrew text probably means, 'Kings at the hand of their armies that weary, find sleep, while the who ruled at home divided (on anticipating the spoil. Surely you will not lie or ease among the sheep-fold! (The spoils are like) the wings of a dove covered with silver, its pillows with the stems of gold. When he who rules in houses covers things upon it, it is as when it snows on Salomon.' But the word 'houses' should more properly be rendered 'household one,' and the words 'upon it' (thereafter) are difficult to understand. The rendering given in the text assumes that they refer to God's inheritance (verse 13) and cry, and thus by inference to God's people, who are described in the second half of the verse as 'blessed while' with spoil. The only part of this psalm clearly taken to the victory of Isaac over King Nimrod (verse 1) and a living actually appeared from 12, 14, and verse 15 of the Hebrew from 12, 14.

<sup>3</sup> vs. 12, 17. The Hebrew text has, 'Why do you look up anxiously, you (infers) rugged hills?' and instead of 'fearful hill' it has 'hill of Bezer' strengthened.

<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew text here has 'the Lord is among them, Sinai, is hollow (as, in a holy place)'. The Latin has 'the Lord is among them, in Sinai, in the holy place,' but it seems clear that Sinai is only introduced by way of comparison, the scene of the picture being in Palestine itself.

<sup>5</sup> 2. Paul in 19th. 43, apparently using verse 12, has 'give gifts to men' instead of 'received gifts among men.' In the second half of the verse, a verb has to be supplied to make sense of 'yea, righteousness (Qualitative), that the Lord might dwell.'

9 say; I will restore them to their land, from Babel to the shore of the high  
 10 sea.<sup>1</sup> Soon the blood of thy enemies will stain thy feet, when a jubel  
 11 that follows thee but shall lick its feet. Then comest, O God, a mark  
 12 for all eyes; he comes, my God and my king, the dweller in the sanctuary.  
 13 Before him go the chiefs, and the ministers with them, while the  
 14 multitude play on their tambours round about. Give praise to the Lord God  
 15 in this solemn assembly, meeting-place of all the streams of Israel. Here  
 16 is Benjamin, youngest of the tribes, kept in worship;<sup>2</sup> here are the chiefs  
 17 of Judah, leading the war, chiefs, too, from Zabulon, chiefs from  
 18 Naphtali.  
 19 O God, give thy power full play, perfect thy own achievement among  
 20 us; so, in thy temple at Jerusalem, kings shall offer gifts before thee. Take  
 21 the wild beasts of the marshes, fierce bulls that lord it over the powerful  
 22 herd of oxen, ready to shut out thy loyal tributaries from their lands;<sup>3</sup>  
 23 scatter the nations that delight in war, till Egypt seeks for pasture, till  
 24 Ethiopia hastens to make her peace with God. Kingdoms of the earth,  
 25 raise your voices in God's house, sing a psalm to the Lord; a psalm to  
 26 God, who rears on the heaven of heavens, ever against the dawn,<sup>4</sup> and  
 27 waves his word in a voice of thunder. Pay honour to God in the name of  
 28 Israel, the God whose splendour and majesty reach up to the clouds.  
 29 How wonderful God is in his holy place! The God of Israel will give his  
 people strength and courage, blessed be God!

PSALM 68

(69)

(To the end, for those who will be transformed; for David.)

1 O GOD, save me; see how the waters rise about me, threatening my  
 2 very life! I am like one who sinks fast in deep mire, with no  
 ground under his feet, one who has ventured out into mid-sea, to be

<sup>1</sup> God says that he will bring back this people, in presumably understood from Babel, from the depths of the sea, according to the Hebrew text; the Latin version has 'to the depths.' The sense is in any case obvious; but the Latin is perhaps best understood as a mere geographical description of Northern Palestine, which lay between the Euphrates country and the Mediterranean.

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew word here used might also be translated, 'leading over them.'

<sup>3</sup> The sense of this verse is far from certain, but it is generally agreed that the wild beasts of the marshes (literally, 'reeds') is a symbol of the power of Egypt. 'Ready to shut out thy loyal tributaries,' literally (in the Latin), 'that they may shut out those who are approved by silver'; there is no agreement about the meaning of the Hebrew word.

<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew text probably means 'from the beginning.'

drawn by the storm. Hearst my throat with crying loudly for help; my eyes were with looking up for mercy to my God. Countless as the hairs on my head are my warmest enemies, powerful the oppressors that wrong me. I have made enemies to them, yea, that never robbed them. O God, thou knowest my frailties, no frailty of mine is hidden from thy sight. Master, Lord of hosts, shall all because of mine being strange to those who trust in thee, make men repent of looking for aid to thee, the God of Israel? It is for thy sake that I have met with reproach, that I have as others shrank with confusion, as outcast among my own brethren, a stranger to my own mother's children. Who is not weary for the labour of thy house that consumed me; was it not weary against thee, the reproach I bear?

What more could I do? I stumbled myself before them by falling; and thou, too, was wroth for falling frailty. I dressed in sackcloth, and they made a by-word of me. Idlers in the market-place would mock me; the drunkards would make a song of me over their wine. To thee, Lord, I make my prayer; never man more needed thy good will. Listen to me, O God, full of mercy as thou art, faithful as thou art to thy promise of aid. Save me from sinking in the mire, rescue me from my enemies, from the deep waters that surrounded me; let me not sink under the flood, swallowed up in its depths, and the wolf's mouth close above me. Listen to me, Lord, of thy gracious mercy, look down upon me in the abundance of thy pity: do not turn thy face away from thy servant in this time of trouble, give a speedy answer to my prayer. Take no heed of my distress, and grant deliverance; relieve me, so hard pressed by my enemies.

Lord, thou knowest how they reproach me, how I blush with shame; so thou wilt how many are my persecutors. Naught else but shame and military does my heart forbode? I look round for pity, where pity is none, for comfort, where there is no comfort to be found. They gave me gall to eat, and when I was thirsty they gave me vinegar to drink.<sup>1</sup> Let their feet be turned like a trap, a snare to reel on them;<sup>2</sup> over as the blind eye be theirs, the bowed back. Pour out thy anger upon them, so let them be overthrown by thy avenging wrath; let their dwelling-place be as deserted, their name for ever unremembered.<sup>3</sup> Who is it they persecute? A man already afflicted by thee; hard was my lot to bear, and thou hast added to it. Do thou add guilt to guilt in their reckoning; let them never as

<sup>1</sup> The meaning of the Hebrew text is probably "Vinegar has broken my heart; I languish in distress."

<sup>2</sup> Job. 31.26.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 12.9.

<sup>4</sup> Am. 1.4.

18 find their way back to thy favour; let their names be blotted out from the record of the living, and never be written among the just.  
 19 See how friendless I am, and how distressed! But thy help, O God, sustains me. I will sing to praise of God's name, make him with all my homage: a more acceptable sacrifice, this, to the Lord than any young bullock, for all its perfume of horns and hoofs. Here is a sight to make the afflicted rejoice; do you, too, search after God, and it will be life to your hearts. The Lord listens to the prayer of the destitute; he does not forget his servants in their distress. To him he prays from sky, earth and sea, and from all the creature that move about them. God will grant deliverance to Sion; the cities of Judah will rise from their ruins, inhabited or new and held firmly in possession, as inheritance for the man that serves him, a home for all true lovers of his name.

## PSALM 69

(70)

(To the end; a psalm of David. In commemoration of the deliverance God brought him.)

1 **O** GOD, take heed, and save me; O Lord, make haste to help me.  
 2 Disappoint them; put them to the blush, the enemies who plot against my life! Baffled let them go their way, that rejoice at my misfortune, slink away in confusion, that crowed over me so loud! Triumphant joy be theirs who long for thee; Praiser to the Lord, be ever their song, who rejoice in thy saving power. Thou wert me helper and deliverer; my God, help me. Thou art my champion and my deliverer; Lord, do not delay thy coming.

## PSALM 70

(71)

(A psalm of David; concerned with Jonathan and the first who were taken captive.)

1 **I**N thee, O God, I put my trust; nay I never be disappointed! Rescue and deliver me, faithful as thou art; listen to my cry for succour.  
 2 Let me find in thee a Divine protector, a stronghold; I have no other support, no other refuge, but thee. Rescue me, Lord, from the power of the wicked, from the grasp of lawlessness and oppression; thou, my Lord and Master, the hope and confidence of my youth. Thou hast upheld me from birth, thou hast guarded me ever since I left my

\* This psalm is usually a repetition of Ps. 39.14-15.



mother's words; and shall I weary of praising thee. I, that am a portent<sup>1</sup> now in the eyes of the multitude!<sup>2</sup> Thou art strong to aid; till these lips will praise, to ring all day long of the glory and the splendour that is thine; do not cast me off now, in my old age; my strength ebb, do not thou forsake me. A mark thou wert set for evildoers' tongues; mutual a cacophonous cacophony together, and whisper, God has abandoned him; now is the time to overtake and seize him, so our sin being him grows now. O God, do not keep thy distance from me; be on the watch, my God, to aid me. Defeat their plot against my life, and bring it to nothing, cover it my ill-wishers with confusion and shame.

Sell will I hope on, praising thee ever more and more. Day in, day is out, these lips shall tell of thy faithfulness, of thy saving power. All enrolled in learning,<sup>3</sup> I will make the great acts of God my theme, thy matchless justice, Lord, proclaim. It is thou, O God, that hast inspired me ere even these the days of my youth, and still I am found telling the tale of thy wisdom. O God, do not fail me, even now when I am old and a grey-headed, until I have made known the proofs of thy power to all the generations that will follow; thy majesty, and that faithfulness of thine which reaches up, O God, to the heavens. What great deeds are thine! There is none like thee, O God, none like thee. Ah, how often dost thou hast made me see times of thine trouble! And still thou wouldst relent, and give me back life, and bring me up again from the very depths of the earth; will thou wouldst give fresh proof of thy goodness, and turn back, to aid and comfort me.<sup>4</sup> So true to thy word, and shall I not give thee thanks as with psalm-maker, praise thee on the harp, O God, the Holy One of Israel? Gladly these lips will ring of thee, this heart, which owns thee in its deliverance. Day in, day out, I will repeat the story of thy faithfulness, and how disappointment and confusion fell on the men who sought to wrong me.

<sup>1</sup> It is not clear in what sense the Psalmist was a portent or sign to his contemporaries, but the context suggests that he may be referring to his great age, and God's long preservation of him.

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew root here is usually translated as meaning, 'I cannot reckon the work' (of God's faithfulness and power), but this interpretation is very far from certain.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. 70, 11. In the Hebrew text we find 'we' where the LXX has 'you'; it is probable, too, that the words should be read as 'I alone'.

## PSALM 71

(72)

(A psalm; for Solomon.)

**G**RANT to the king, O God, thy own will in judgement; the  
inheritor of a throne, may he be just, as thou art just; may he give  
thy people right awards, and to thy poor, redress. Such be the harvest  
his subjects shall reap, peace on every mountain, justice on every hill-side.  
Right award he will give to friendless folk; protect the children of the  
poor, and crush the oppressor. Agleam his reign, while sun and  
moon shine down; kindly as the rain that drops on the thorn bush, as  
the showers that water the earth. Justice in his days shall thrive, and the  
blessings of peace; and may those days last till the moon shines no more!  
From sea to sea, from the great river to the ends of earth, his sway  
shall reach. In his presence the Ethiopians will bow down, all his  
enemies will be humbled in the dust; gifts shall flow in from the lords  
of Tharsis and the islands, tribute from the kings of Arabia and of  
Saba; all the kings of the earth must needs bring their homage, all the  
nations serve him. He will give the poor nations when they cry to him,  
mercies folk, with none to befriend them; in their need and helplessness,  
they shall have his compassion. Their lives he will take from his keeping,  
set them free from the chains of slavery and oppression; no name of theirs  
dishonoured in his sight. Long life shall be his, and gold from Arabia  
shall be given him;<sup>1</sup> men will pray for him continually, bless his name  
evermore. The land shall have good store of corn,<sup>2</sup> high up the hill-  
sides, springing up like the trees of Lebanon; shall multiply in children;  
like grass on the ground. For ever let his name be used in blessing, a  
name to endure while the sun gives light; in him all the tribes of the  
earth shall be enriched, all the nations shall extol him. Blessed be the  
Lord God of Israel, who does wonderful deeds to none else, and blessed  
for ever be his glorious name; all the earth shall be filled with his glory,  
Amen, Amen. (Here end the psalm<sup>3</sup> of David the son of Jonat.)

<sup>1</sup> Some interpreters would make this mean that the poor man (previously referred to in the psalm) will be saved from death, and will be given gold by the king—or perhaps that he will give the king gold; but these suggestions have little to recommend them.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'a sustenance'; the Hebrew text makes the meaning of this clear.

<sup>3</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'the psalm.' It is the general opinion of commentators, that one section or volume of the Psalms ended here. In the second half of the Psalter, as in the first, many Psalms are so headed which claim King David as their author.

## PSALM 72

(72)

[A psalm of Asaph.]

WHAT bounty God shows to Israel, to all upright hearts! Yet I came near to losing my foothold, for the ground sunk under my steps, so indignant was I at seeing the good fortunes of sinners than I defy his law; men that have no hope in death, so confident to support them in calamity.<sup>1</sup> Not for those to share man's common lot of trouble; the plagues which afflict humankind will pass them by? No wonder if they are overcome with pride, boast their lawlessness and impiety. How much doubt<sup>2</sup> from those pompous lips; how easily they attain the desire of their heart! On mischief they brood, of mischief they talk; dressed on high they preach injustice; their discourse reaches heaven, and their false tales win currency on earth.

Seriously the men of my own race look on, to see them enjoying as their fall opens of life? Can God, they ask, be aware of this? Does not the most High know of all that passes? Look at those sinners, how they prosper in the world, how they gain mastery of riches! Why is this, thought I, it is to no purpose that I have kept my heart true, and washed my hands clean among pure souls; still, all day long, as I am plagued for it, and no morning comes but my scourging is renewed. Was I to utter that thought? Nay, that were to put the whole company of thy children in the wrong. I set myself to read the middle, but it proved a hard search, until I besought myself to God's sanctuary,<sup>3</sup> and considered, there, what becomes of such men at last. The truth is, as thou dost repay their wickedness, there, at the height of their fortune, dost overthrow them; what a ruin is theirs! How suddenly they vanish away, cut off in their selfishness! The very memory of them, Lord, is like a waking dream, heard of in thy holy city no more.<sup>4</sup>

My heart so full of bitterness, my innermost thoughts so deeply moved, as I am brought to nothing, I am all ignorance, standing there like a

<sup>1</sup> The meaning of the Hebrew text is very uncertain; the rendering given seems to mean probably the meaning of the Latin, which is sometimes rendered, 'they do not think about death, their chastisement is distant.'

<sup>2</sup> 'Hinder doubt'; the sense of the Hebrew text is, 'their eyes stand out,' or possibly, 'their eyes look out.'

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew text has, 'To many people were low attention to them, and dash their ill of mine,' it is not clear in what sense.

<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew text can also be understood as meaning, 'covered into God's sanctuary.'

<sup>5</sup> 'In thy holy city'; the Hebrew text may mean, 'what thou art accused.'

as dumb beast before them; yet am I ever close to thee, and thou dost hold  
 me by my right hand. Thine to lead me in a way of thy own choosing,  
 as thine to welcome me into glory at last. What else dost heaven hold  
 for me, but thyself? What pleasure should I find in all thy gifts on  
 earth? This frame, this earthly being of mine must come to an end;  
 still God will comfort my heart, God will be, eternally, my inheritance.  
 Let those others may be, who desert thy name, but are all those who  
 break their neck with thee; I know no other content but clinging to God,  
 putting my trust in the Lord, my Master; within the gates of royal Sion  
 I will be the herald of thy praise.

## PSALM 73

(74)

(Of understanding, for Asaph.)

**O** GOD, hast thou altogether abandoned us? Shrug of thy eye,  
 perceiving, must we feel the loss of thy vengeance? Behold thou  
 of the company thou hast gathered, bought them in, long ago, chosen  
 them for thyself, to be the stock of thy chosen race, where but on  
 a moment thou wouldst thou have thy dwelling-place? Lift up thy hand,  
 to crush human pride for ever! For what have thy enemies have wrought  
 in the holy place, how their maker has triumphed in the very products,<sup>1</sup>  
 setting up its symbols, strange emblems, ever gay-day and train-  
 sled. Here after here, like woodman in the forest, they have broken  
 through its doors with axes, brought it down, with pick and hammer,  
 to the ground. They have set fire to thy sanctuary, sullied the dwelling-  
 place of thy glory in the dust. They have but one thought, the whole  
 breed of them, to sweep away all God's worship<sup>2</sup> from the land; our  
 own emblems are nowhere to be seen, there are no prophets now, none  
 will acknowledge us.<sup>3</sup> O God, shall our enemy trust in everlastingly,  
 shall blasphemy will defy thy name? Why dost thou withhold thy  
 hand? That right hand of thine, must it always be idle in thy house?  
 Ours is a King who reigned before time was here on earth he has the  
 power to bring deliverance. What power but thine could keep up the  
 shifting sea, crush the power of the monster beneath its waters; chance

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'thy idols thou hast.' The words which follow are difficult to translate, whether in the Latin or in the Hebrew text.

<sup>2</sup> Literally 'statues.'

<sup>3</sup> Those will acknowledge us: literally 'he will not recognize us'; which may refer either to God or (by a Hebrew usage) to men generally. The Hebrew text here probably means, 'there is none of us who can tell how long' (the treasury will last).

Leviathan's power, and give him up as prey to the dwellers in the desert? Then shall open up fountains and streams of water; then, too, shall modest the rivers of Elisha run dry.<sup>1</sup> This is the day, this the night, the dawn and the eve of the fishmonger; thou hast found all the bounds of earth, modest the seasons, modest the cool of the year. Will: thou say so loud, when thy enemies want thee, and in their wildernesses set the name of Jael at defiance? Will thou throw us to wild beasts, the beasts that still acknowledge thee? Souls unbelonged, but for thee, wilt thou leave us quite forgotten? Behold that of thy covenant, a darkness has fallen on the land, and the lure of oppression are all about us. Do not let the humble go away disappointed; reach the poor and the helpless to reach thy name. Beside thyself, O God, to vindicate thy own cause, do not forget the wants which restless men find at thee all day long. do not overlook them, the triumphant cries of thy enemies, the ever growing insolence that has defied thee.

## PSALM 74

(75)

(To the end; do not destroy, a psalm-song of Asaph.)

**W**E will praise thee, O God, and, praising thee, call upon thy name; we will tell the story of thy wondrous deeds. When the time is ripe, I will judge strictly: justice grows the earth, and all that dwell on it, I alone support in fabric.<sup>2</sup> Rebel no more, I cry to the rebels, Abate your pride, to the transgressors, Abate your overreaching pride, that haughty defiance at God himself. No need to look eastward or westward, or to the desert mountains of the north: it is God who rules all, humbling one man and exalting another. In the Lord's hand is a cup of strong wine, brewed till it overflows; he holds it to our men's lips, then to another's; but the dogs are not drunken yet, sinners

<sup>1</sup> *see. 100.13*. Some think these verses refer to the escape of Israel from Egypt and the miracles done in the wilderness, Leviathan perhaps the crocodile designated as a symbol of Egypt. Elisha, in that case, may be the same as Elisha (*see. 12.17*) but the Hebrew text is generally rendered 'thou shalt ever-flowing rivers run dry'. Others think the whole is an allegorical account of the Creation.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Hebrew text, 'beasts that still acknowledge thee' should be 'the dove'.

<sup>3</sup> *see. 2. 4*. It is not clear whether the speaker is God or man, nor whether he is still the speaker in verse 3 *esp.* The two verses are technically interpreted as God's own witness, but a comparison of verse 11 below suggests that an earthly judge may be intended; 'the earth' in verse 4 may also be translated 'the land'.

as everywhere must drink them. Mine it is to bear everlasting record,  
a singing praise to the God of Jacob; mine to crush the pride of every  
sinner, and raise high the courage of the just.

PSALM 75

(76)

(To the end, with praise; a psalm of Asaph; a song against the  
Assyrians.)

1 **I**T is in Judaea God makes himself known, to Israel that his name  
is called; and there, in the city of peace, he makes his abode,  
dwells in Zion. It was there he broke the power of the archers, broke  
sickle, and sword, and battle array. How wonderful was thy dawning  
on the evening hills! Rooted, their rash design, there they sleep on,  
empty-handed, the warriors in their pride; there they sleep on, the  
herdsmen, overthrown, God of Jacob, at thy word of rebuke.

2 Who can resist thee, or resist, so sudden in thy anger? Loud  
sings in heaven the choir thou artives; earth trembles and is clean  
when God raises himself to smite his enemies, giving redress to  
those who are scorned on earth. Then, human makes itself still to  
praise thee; men that were whole once make pilgrimage in thy honour.\*

3 To the Lord your God for your vows be made and paid, tributary  
nations on every side; so God that is feared by swartest princes,  
feared among all the kings of the earth.

PSALM 76

(77)

(To the end, for singing; a psalm of Asaph.)

1 **T**O the Lord I cry aloud for succour, cry aloud to the God who  
will not refuse a hearing. To God I look when storm comes  
upon me; in his presence I lift up my hands amid the darkness, not in  
vain.<sup>1</sup> My heart is vexed against all consolation; it is to God my thoughts  
turn, in him lies all my comfort, all my trust. So I wait, with fasting

<sup>1</sup> If the traditional title of this Psalm gives the true account of it, the reference is probably to the defeat of Sennacherib (II Par. xxxv).

<sup>2</sup> The sense of this verse is very uncertain; in the Hebrew text, God is spoken of as "glorifying himself" with what is left of human nation.

<sup>3</sup> Or perhaps, "and I am not disappointed"; literally, "I was not deceived." The Hebrew text has, "I did not cease."

spirits, my eyes craving for the dawn,<sup>1</sup> silent and bewildered. I reflect upon days long past, the immortal years possess my mind; lonely thoughts occupy my thoughts at midnight, stir my heart to its depths. Can it be that God will always leave us forsaken, will never show us again a his old kindness? Will he shut us out for ever, generation after generation, from his pity? Can God forget to be gracious, can anger move him to withhold his mercy? And now I resolve to begin afresh: it is at such times that the Most High returns in his dealings with men.<sup>2</sup>

Now to remember all the Lord has done, now to recall those wonderful acts of His, since first the world was; to ponder over all thy dealings, to make thy secret designs my study! Thy path, O God, is unhidden about with holiness; what God is great as our God is great! Thy ways wonderful are within thy Dwelling, even to the Gentiles thou wouldst make thy power known, by forcing them to see how thy people, the sons of Jacob and of Joseph. The waters are deep, O God, the waters troubled at the sight of thee, moved to their lowest depths; how the waters roared unceasingly, what tumult among the clouds! To and fro the arrows passed, thy thunders whirled round about, all all the world shone with thy lightning, and the troubled earth shook. Thy way led through the sea, the deep tide made a road for thee, and none may read the traces of thy passage, where thou, with Moses and Aaron as thy shepherds, didst bring thy people out on their journey.

## PSALM 77

(78)

(Of understanding; for Asaph.)

**L**ISTEN, my people, to this testament of mine, do not turn a deaf ear to the words I utter as I declare my meaning to you under a quiet, taking my theme from days long ago.<sup>3</sup> It is a story often heard, well known among us, have not our fathers told it to us, a thing not to be kept back from their children, from the generation which followed? Their talk was of God's praise, of his power often made known, of the wonderful deeds he did. He made a covenant with Jacob, gave Israel his law, commanding our fathers to make it known to their children,

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'my eyes toward the night-watch.' The Hebrew text probably means, 'Thou dost hold my spirits awake.'

<sup>2</sup> 'I resolve to begin afresh'; the Hebrew text seems to mean, 'I tell myself, This is my weakness.' In the second half of the psalm, the Hebrew text has 'the years of the right hand of the most High.'

<sup>3</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'I will ever age-long declare'; cf. Mic. 12:12, where the Hebrew text is evidently followed.

1 so that a new generation might learn by: none would be born to them to  
 2 take their place, and hand it on to their own sons after them. They were  
 3 to put their trust in God, ever remembering his Divine dealings with  
 4 them, ever loyal to his commands; they were not to be like their fathers,  
 5 a stubborn and defiant breed, a generation of false aims, of a spirit that  
 breaks faith with God.

6 So it was that the sons of Ephraim cut away their horns,<sup>1</sup> already  
 7 bent, shrinking from the day of battle when it came. They were false  
 8 to God's covenant, refused to follow his law, as if they had forgotten  
 9 all his miracles, all those wonderful deeds of his they had witnessed.  
 10 Had not their fathers been wonderful enough in Egypt, on the plains  
 11 of Tanis, when he parted the sea to let them pass through it, making  
 12 its waters stand firm as though in a dream;<sup>2</sup> when he led them with a  
 13 cloud by day, with glowing fire all through the night? He pierced  
 14 the rock, too, in the desert, and stirred their thirst as if from some deep  
 15 pool, bidding the rock yield water, till fountains gushed from it,  
 abundant as rivers.

16 And still they went on offending him, there in the wilderness,  
 17 rebelling against the Most High, challenging God in their thoughts  
 18 to give them the food they craved for. Bitterly they asked, Can God  
 19 spread a table for us in the wilderness? True, he smote the rock, and  
 20 made water flow from it, till the streams ran in flood, but can he give  
 21 bread too, and make a feast for his people? All this the Lord heard,  
 22 and waited a while;<sup>3</sup> but already a fire was lit among the sons of Jacob,  
 23 already his anger was mounting against Israel. What, had they no  
 24 faith in God, no trust in his power to save? He told his command  
 25 upon the clouds above them, threw open the doors of heaven, and  
 26 rained down manna for them to eat. The bread of heaven was his  
 27 gift to them; man should eat the food of angels,<sup>4</sup> and as their want  
 28 should be supplied abundantly. Next, he swept away the south wind  
 29 from the sky;<sup>5</sup> it was his power that sent them a south-west wind,  
 30 raining down manna on them thick as dust, birds on the wing, plentiful  
 31 as the sea-weed. Lest their very camp should fall, close about their tents;

<sup>1</sup> Ephraim<sup>1</sup> is probably used here to represent the people of Israel, as often in the psalms, who contend as with Tadm<sup>1</sup> (cf. v. 85). The Hebrew text may imply that the Israelites shut with their horns, and that they drove them away. The reference may be to the refusal to invade Palestine (Num. 24) but the denouement of this psalm is difficult to disentangle.

<sup>2</sup> Literally 'waxen-herbs' in the Hebrew text, 'in a heap.'

<sup>3</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'was angry.' The same is true of 'passed down by' in v. 78.

<sup>4</sup> Literally 'of the strong,' according to the Hebrew text.

<sup>5</sup> The Hebrew text gives 'moved an eastern wind across the sky.'



and they ate, and took their fill. All they asked, he granted them; so he would not disappoint them of their longing. But while the food was yet in their mouths, God's anger against them rose, and slew them a hundred, caught them unawares, all the flowers of Israel.

Yet, with all this, they continued to offend him; all his wonderful deeds as left them faithless still. And ever their lives passed away like a breath, as still the end of their years was hounded on. When he threatened them with death, they would search after him, coming back belated to look for him; they would remind themselves that it was God who had so protected them, his almighty power that had delivered them. Loving a profession more as their life, but they were false imagines that spoke to him; their hearts were not true to him, no loyalty bound them to his covenant. Yet, such is his mercy, he would still pardon their faults, and spare them from destruction; again and again he turned his vengeance aside, let his anger die down. He would not forget as that they were flesh and blood, no better than a breath of wind, that passes by and never returns. How often the desert saw them in revolt against him, how often, in their rebellion, they defied his anger! Always a new challenge to God's power, new rebellions against the Holy One of Israel!

Had they forgotten all he did for them, that day when he set them at free from the power of their oppressors, all those miracles among the waters of Egypt, those portents in the plain of Tineh, when he turned as all their streams, all their channels into blood, so that they could not drink? He sent out fire, to their ruin, frogs to bring devastation on them, gave all their harvest over to the mildew,<sup>1</sup> their village to the locust, sent hail on their vineyards, frost on their mulberry-trees, as for the hail came in way with their cattle, the fire with their flocks, as he let his anger loose on them in all its vehemence; what rage, what fury, what havoc, as the angels of destruction went on their errand! So, as the way made ready for his vengeance, he took toll of their herds, doomed even their cattle to death; on every first-born creature in Egypt, on the first-fruits of increase in all the dwellings of Cham, his stroke fell. Then, as like a shepherd, he rescued his own people, led them, his own flock, through the wilderness; guided them in safety, free from all alarm, while as the sea closed over their enemy. So he brought them to the mountain as which is his sanctuary, the mountain he took, with his own right hand for title; so he drove out the heathen as their enemy, parcelled out the land as them by lot, to each his own inheritance, hiding the tribes of Israel small where the heathen had dwelt before them.

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, "the caterpillar."

19 These were the men who defied the most high God, and rebelled  
 against him; would not observe his decrees, but turned away and  
 broke faith with him as their fathers had done, like a bow that plays  
 at the archer's feign; made mountains shrink, to court his anger, covered  
 with anger, to smite his jealousy! The Lord heard the hiss of it, and  
 passed them by, selecting Israel as utter scorn; he despoil his tabernacle  
 as to life, that tabernacle where once he dwelt among men. A prey,  
 now, to the captor, all that once was strong, a prey now, all that once  
 was life, to the power of the enemy; he would leave his people at the  
 mercy of the sword, reject his own inheritance. Their young men  
 led the flames, and where were the maidens to mourn for them?  
 20 Their princes fell by the sword, and none was left to lament over their  
 widows.<sup>1</sup>  
 21 Then suddenly, like a man that wakes up from sleep, like some  
 warrior that lay, all now, benumbed with wine, the Lord roused himself;  
 22 he smote his enemies as they turned to flee,<sup>2</sup> brained them for ever  
 with shame. Yet he refused, now, to make his dwelling with Joseph;  
 23 it was not the tribe of Ephraim he would choose; he chose the tribe  
 24 of Judah, and the hill of Zion, there to house his love. And there,  
 as well for ever undisturbed, he built his sanctuary, terrible as the  
 25 pasture-grounds of the wild oxen.<sup>3</sup> He chose David, too, for his  
 servant; took him away from herding the sheep, made him leave off  
 26 following the ewes that were in milk, and be the shepherd of Jacob's  
 27 sons, his own people, of Israel, his own domain. He was the loyal  
 herdsman that should feed them, his the skilled hand that should be their  
 guide.

## PSALM 78

(79)

(A psalm of Asaph.)

**O** GOD, the heathen have broken into thy inheritance; they have  
 profaned the temple, thy sanctuary, and brought Jerusalem low  
 as an orchard wall. They have thrown the corpses of thy servants to  
 feed all the birds of heaven; wild beasts prey on the carcase of the

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text has 'their maidens were not given in marriage' (literally, 'had no song of praise sung over them').

<sup>2</sup> The LXX has here too, 'Male widows were not mourned for': the Hebrew 'male widows could not marry.'

<sup>3</sup> Or possibly 'in their barns' (cf Kg. 5, 5).

<sup>4</sup> 'Terrible as the pasture grounds of the wild oxen': the Hebrew text has simply 'rejoiced as high.'

just; blood has flowed like water on every side of Jerusalem, and there was none to bury the dead. What a triumph was this for the nations that dwell around us; how have our neighbours mocked and derided us! Lord, must we always taste thy vengeance, must thy jealous anger still burn unquenched? Pour out this indignation of thine upon the nations that do not acknowledge thee, on the kingdoms that never breathe thy name; see how they have made Israel their prey, and left his dwelling-place in ruins! Forget the long record of our sin, and have in mercy to our side; never was need so sore as this.

O God, our Saviour, help us; deliver us, Lord, for the glory of thy name, and pardon our sin for the sake of thy own covenant! Shall to the heathen ask, What has become of their God? Shall our eyes ever witness thy vengeance upon the Gentiles, that vengeance thou wilt take for thy servant's blood? Could not the growing of the captive reach the prison? Thy arm has not lost its strength; claim for thy own the children of the slave! Pour our seven-fold affliction into the laps of our neighbours, for all the iniquity, Lord, which they have put upon thee; and we, thy own people, sheep of thy pasturing, will give thee thanks for ever, coloring, from one generation to the next, the story of thy mercies.

## PSALM 79

(116)

(To the end, for those who will be transformed; the melody of Joseph; a psalm.)

**G**IVE audience, thou that art the guide of Israel, that leader Joseph with a shepherd's care. Thou who art enthroned above the Cherubim, reveal thyself to Siphath, Babylon, and Minasse; exert thy sovereign strength, and come to our aid. O God, rescue us to our own; smile upon us, and we shall find deliverance. Lord God of hosts, wilt thou always turn away in anger from the servant's prayer; wilt thou shut us nothing but eyes for our daily food and drink? Thou hast made us a spotted price to our neighbour, enemies mock at our affliction! O God of hosts, rescue us to our own; smile upon us, and we shall find deliverance.

Long ago, thou didst bring a vine out of Egypt, rooting out the heathen to plant it here; thou didst prepare the way for its spreading, and it took root where thou hadst planned it, filled the whole land. Now it overshadowed the hills, now the cedars, dimly tall, were overtopped by its branches! It spread out its branches to the sea, its

<sup>1</sup> For "the children of the slave" the Hebrew text has "have doomed to death."

as shoots as far as the great river. Why is it that in these days thou hast  
 as levelled its wall, for every passer-by to rob it of its fruit? See how  
 the wild bear ravages it, lion dweller in the woods, and flocks pasture  
 in it!<sup>1</sup> God of hosts, with thine ear relent, and look down from heaven,  
 as look to this vine that needs thy tending!<sup>2</sup> Reverse this stock which thy  
 hand has planted, offering that by their thorns, and thorns for them.  
 as Blasted with fire is that stock, and near uprooted, there is death in thy  
 as forest.<sup>3</sup> Thy chosen friends, a curse<sup>4</sup> by their thriving, and thriving for  
 as thee, O let thy hand protect them still! Hereafter we will never forsake  
 as thee; grieve us little, and we will live only to invoke thy name. Lord God  
 of hosts, restore us to our own; smile upon us, and we shall find deliver-  
 ance.

## PSALM 80

(81)

(To the end, for the wine-pipers; a psalm of Asaph's sons.)

as **REJOICE** we all in honour of the God who aids us; cry out with  
 as gladness to the God of Jacob: take up the psalm. The tambour,  
 as shout! The harp, sweetly sounding, and the minstrel! The new moon  
 as has come; blow the trumpet loud, to give our festival! Truly demands  
 as it of Israel; it was a decree the God of Jacob made. bidding Joseph  
 as remember the day when he escaped from Egypt. The also speech heard  
 as no more,<sup>1</sup> his shoulder eased of the burden, his hands free, at last,  
 as from the slavery of the land! Such deliverance I brought, when thou  
 as didst cry out to me in thy misery; then gave thee audience under a canopy  
 of cloud, and saved thy loyalty in the Waters of Rebellion.  
 as Give heed, my people, to this warning of mine; Israel, wilt thou  
 as listen? Then let no strange worship find a home with thee; never let  
 as thy knees be bowed to an alien god; am not I the Lord thy God, I, who  
 as rescued thee from Egypt? Open thy mouth wide, and thou shalt have  
 as thy fill. So I speak, but my people would not listen; heard went no

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text probably means, 'the load from the woods ravages it, and the wild bear devours it.'

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'they will perish before thy threatening face,' referring either to the people of Israel, or (more probably) to those in general who know God's anger.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'the man of thy right hand, the son of man.' This probably refers to David particularly.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'He had (all these) been hearing a language he did not know.' The Hebrew text gives, 'I heard a language I did not know'; it is not clear in what sense; some think a human speaker is intended, the rest of the psalm being the content of his mysterious oracles.

unloading, till I was able to let them have all they had set their hearts on  
 on, following their own devices. Ah, if my people had but listened to  
 to me! If Israel had but taken me for their guide! How lightly, then, it  
 would I have brought their enemies low, without their persecuting!

But now, the Lord's enemies have won him over; age after age their in-  
 propriety endures; full ears of wheat are still the nourishment he re-  
 gives them, and honey dripping from the rock to their hearts' content.<sup>1</sup>

## PSALM 81

(82)

(A psalm of Asaph.)

**S**EE, where he stands, the Ruler of all, among the rulers<sup>1</sup> assembled,  
 comes forward to pronounce judgment on the rulers themselves!  
 Will you never cease perverting justice, exposing the cause of the  
 weak?<sup>2</sup> Come, give justice to the poor and the friendless, do right  
 to the afflicted and the destitute; to you need and poverty look for  
 deliverance, rescue them from the hand of the oppressor. But no,  
 ignorant and unperceiving, they grasp their way in darkness; see how  
 unstable are the props of earth! Gods you are, I myself have declared  
 in; favoured children, every one of you, of the most High;<sup>3</sup> yet the  
 doom of mortals awaits you, you shall fall with the fall of human princes.  
 Break thyself, Lord, bring for world to judgment; all the nations  
 are thy own domain.

## PSALM 82

(83)

(A psalm-song of Asaph.)

**O** GOD, who can compare with thee? O God, do not keep still;  
 now, do not hold back now! What turned among thy enemies;  
 how their malice lifts its head! Maliciously they plot against thy people,  
 oppress the ruin of the men thou hast set apart for thyself. Come,

<sup>1</sup> vs. 18 and 19: In the Mishnaic text, the former verse and perhaps the latter also must be taken as referring to what would have happened if the enemies of the Lord would have come crawling before him, and their ill devices would have been for ever; God would have fettered them (i.e., the Israelites) with full ears of wheat; but it is difficult to make the Latin version yield any other sense than that given above.

<sup>2</sup> Literally "weak" as in verse 4, the Divine name being specially applied to this way to judge (cf. Ex. 22.6).

<sup>3</sup> Ps. 104.16.

they whisper, let us put an end to their sovereignty, so that the very name of Israel will be remembered no more. All are agreed, all allies are ranged in confederacy against them; hence Edom has conspired, these Idumei; Moab, too, and the Agarenes; Geshur, Ammon and Amalek, the Philistines, and the folk that dwell at Tyre. Even Asuptia has made common cause with them, lends her aid to their children of Lot.<sup>1</sup>

Do to them what thou didst to Midian, to Sisera and Jabin at the brook of Chisai: the men who died at Endor, rotted there like dung on the ground.<sup>2</sup> May their prisoners fare as Oreb fared, and Zeb, may the doom of Zebek and Salmana be the doom of all their chieftains. And did they think to make God's sanctuary their spoil? My God, send them whirling this way and that, like straw before the wind. See how the fire burns up the forest, how its flames scorch the mountain-side! So the storm of thy anger will sweep them, thy fury will dismay them. Let their chariot black crimson with shame, Lord, as they come to sue for thy favour; confusion and dismay be theirs for ever, for ever let them be shamed and brought to nothing, all they, too, know the meaning of 'Yeh's name, acknowledge thee as the most high God, the Overlord of earth.

## PSALM 83

(14)

(To the end, for the whisperings to the sons of Core, a psalm.)

**L**ORD of hosts, how I love thy dwelling-place! For the corner-stone of the Lord's house, my soul faints with longing. The living God at his name my heart, my whole being thrills with joy. Where else should the sparrow find a home, the dove a nest for her brood, but as thy shut, Lord of hosts, my king and my God? How blessed, Lord, are those who dwell in thy house! They will be ever praising thee. How blessed is the man who finds his strength in thee! He sets his heart on an upward journey, that leads through a valley of weeping, but to his goal.<sup>3</sup> Strong is their Master's blessing, the pilgrims go on from height to height, all they meet him in Shilo, the God of all gods.

<sup>1</sup> *vs. 7-9.* It is not certain what was the occasion of this psalm. The names given suggest a marauding attack on the Jews by all their neighbours; the children of Lot are the Moabites and the Ammonites (*Gen. 19.30*).

<sup>2</sup> *vs. 10-12.* See *Is. 41.7,20 f.*

<sup>3</sup> In the Hebrew text, "When he passes through a valley of weeping, he comes to him a well."

Lord God of hosts, listen to my prayer! God of Israel, grant me a  
 sentence! God, our protector, do not disregard us now; look  
 favourably upon him whom thou hast anointed! Willingly would  
 I give a thousand of my days for one spent in thy court! Willingly  
 do these singers, in the house of my God, so I might dwell no more  
 in the shade of violence! God loves mercy and faithfulness;<sup>1</sup> all favour,  
 all heaven, come of the Lord's gift. To innocent lives he will never  
 refuse his luxury; Lord of hosts, blessed is the man who puts his  
 confidence in thee.

## PSALM 84

(11)

(To the end, for the sons of Cori, a psalm.)

**W**HAT blessings, Lord, thou hast granted to this land of thine,  
 restoring Jews from captivity, pardoning thy people's guilt,  
 turning away the wrath of their sins, all thy anger calmed, thy fierce  
 displeasure forgotten! And now, God of our deliverance, do thou  
 restore us; no longer let us see thy wrath. Shouldst thou always be  
 indignant with us? Must thy remembrance remember us, age after age?  
 Nay, thou wilt relent, O God, and give fresh life, to rejoice the spirits  
 of thy people. Show us thy mercy, Lord; grant us thy deliverance!

Let me listen, now, to the voice of the Lord God within me; it is  
 a message of peace he sends to his people, to his loyal servants, that  
 come back, now, to take counsel of their hearts.<sup>2</sup> For us, his work is  
 skilful, deliverance is close at hand in this land of ours, the divine  
 glory is to find a home.<sup>3</sup> See, where mercy and faithfulness meet in  
 us; how justice and peace are united in our conduct! Faithfulness  
 grows up out of the earth, and from heaven, justice looks down. The  
 Lord, now, will grant us his blessing, to make our land yield its harvest;  
 justice will go on before him, to make the way ready for his progress.

<sup>1</sup> It is not certain whether King David, or the people of Israel, is here referred to as the anointed (or Chosen) of God.

<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'the Lord is a man and a child.'

<sup>3</sup> Literally, in the Latin, 'who come back to the house,' cf. Is. 41.1 the Septuagint Greek has, 'to those who were their hearts back to him.' The Hebrew text is quite different, 'let them not turn back to their folly.'

<sup>4</sup> vs. 12, 13. These verses perhaps imply that God's fidelity to his promises and God's mercy have combined to restore the Jewish people; that his justice, united with the expiation of their sins, no longer judges them guilty and withholding; that loyalty to the old covenant is once more a fertile growth in the land of Israel, and that God looks down to reward it. But the passage may be a more general one.

## PSALM 86

(86)

(A prayer of David's son.)

**T**URN thy ear, Lord, and listen to me in my helplessness and my  
 1 need. Protect a life dedicated to thyself; rescue a servant of thine,  
 2 my God, that puts his trust in thee. Have mercy, O Lord, for mercy  
 3 I plead continually; comfort thy servant's heart, this heart that aches,  
 4 Lord, to thee. What is so kind and forgiving, Lord, as thou art, who  
 5 art rich in mercy to all who invoke thee? Give a hearing, then, Lord,  
 6 to my prayer; listen to my plea when I cry out to thee in a time  
 7 of sore distress, pleading on thy audience. There is none like thee, Lord,  
 8 among the gods; none can do as thou dost. Lead, all the nations  
 9 thou hast made must needs come and worship thee, honouring thy  
 10 name, so great thou art, so marvellous in thy doings, thou who alone  
 art God.

11 Guide me, Lord, thy own way, thy faithful cure my need, make this  
 12 heart thrill with reverence for thy name. O Lord my God, with all my  
 13 heart I will give thee thanks, eternally hold thy name in honour for the  
 goodness of the mercy thou hast showed me, in raising me thus from  
 14 the lowest depths of hell. And now, O God, see how the despisers of thy  
 law have set upon me, how their dread conspiracy threatens my life, with  
 15 no thought of thee to restrain it! But thou, Lord, art a God of mercy and  
 16 pity, patient, compassionate, true to thy promise. Look upon me and be  
 merciful to me; rescue, with thy sovereign aid, one whose mother bore  
 17 him to thy service! Show me some token of thy favour; let my enemies  
 see, abashed, how thou dost help me, how thou, Lord, dost comfort me.

## PSALM 86

(87)

(For the sons of Goss; a psalm-song.)

**H**IS own building stands the ivy-clad hills, the Lord loves Zion  
 1 more dearly than any other house is loved. City of God, how  
 2 high the claim that is made for thee: I can tell of Egypt and of Babylon  
 3 as peoples that know me well. The Philistines, too, and the Tyrians,  
 4 and the Ethiopians, too, all have visited her. Not for Zion is boast  
 5 that this man or that man was born in her, when she was founded  
 6 by no other than the Most High. So the Lord proclaims, telling the



rule of nations and princes that have visited her. All the world, rejoicing, finds its dwelling-place in thee.<sup>1</sup>

## PSALM 87

(88)

(A psalm-song for the sons of Core to the end, for an answer for Mahabab of understanding, for Benai the Beniamite.)

**L**ORD God, my deliverer, day and night I cry aloud to thee; let my prayer reach thy presence, give audience to my cry, for indeed my heart is full of trouble. My life sinks ever closer to the grave; I count as one of those who go down into the abyss, a man past all help, there among the lordless dead. It is with me as with men laid low in the grave, men that remember no longer, can say, now, from thy protecting hand. Such is the place where they have laid me, in the depths of earth, midst darkness and in the shadow of death; heavily the anger weighs down on me, and thou dost overwhelm me with its full flood. They hast removed all my acquaintance from me, so that they treat me as a thing accursed; I lie in a prison wherein there is no escape, my eyes grow dim, waiting for the help that does not come. So, all day long, I call upon thee, all day long stretch out my hands to thee.

Not for the dead thy wonderful power is shown; what physician can a being lay back alive to give thee thanks? Those in the grave, how can they recount thy wondrous how shall he call of thy faithfulness, now that life is gone? How can there be talk of thy marvels in a world of shadows, of thy goodness in a land where all is forgotten? Thy power, O Lord, till I lastly, it shall reach thee while there is yet time. Why dost thou reject my plea, Lord, and turn thy face away from me? Ever since is youth, need and sorrow have been my lot, lifted up only to be cast down and left bewildered; and now I am overwhelmed with thy anger, distressed by thy threats, that will cut me off like a flood all at once surounding me. Never a friend or a neighbour has left me, never an acquaintance to comfort my distress.

<sup>1</sup> *vv. 4-7.* The issue of this passage is very obscure, and the versions differ both from the Hebrew text and from one another. In the Hebrew text, the words 'This man was born there' appear in verse 2, instead of 'all have visited her' and verse 4 reads 'The Lord, keeping record of the nations, will nation. This man was born there.' Verse 5 begins simply 'It shall be Zion's boast', and the last verse appears to run: 'The singers, like the dancers, shall say: All my dwellings are in thee.' The Greek Septuagint, in verse 4, has 'I will make mention to my fathers of Egypt and of Babylon'; and in verse 5, 'Men will say, Zion is a mother, and a man has been born in her.'

## PSALM 135

(135)

(Of thanksgiving for Elisha to Elishah.)

**H**ERE is a song to put the Lord's wonders on record for men's eyes will pass, and tell these words of mine shall proclaim thy faithful-ness. There, in the heavens, thou hast framed a design of everlasting mercy;<sup>1</sup> thine thy faithful promises run, I have made a covenant with my chosen people, sworn an oath to my servant David: To all time I will make thy posterity constant, age after age I will bid thy throne endure.

And are not these heavens, Lord, witnesses of thy wonderful power, of thy faithfulness, before the court of the holy ones? Who is there above the clouds to rival the Lord, where is God's like among all his sons? How honoured is God, in that assembly of the holy ones; how great he is, how reverenced by all that stand about him! Lord God of hosts, who can compare with thee, in the powers, Lord, that is thine, is in the faithfulness that everywhere attends thee? It is thou that dost mark the pride of the sea, and calm the tumult of its waves; backstest thou crooked at the first,<sup>2</sup> where thy strong arm has routed thy enemies. Thine are the heavens, thine the earth's surface, thou, of the world and all it holds. The north wind and the sea are of thy fashioning;<sup>3</sup> thy voice wakes the glad echoes of Lebanon and Hermon. Thine is a warrior's arm, show the strength of that hand, life is on high! Right and justice are the pillars of thy throne; mercy and faithfulness the benches of thy coming.

Happy is the people that knows well the thou of praise, fast love, Lord, in the souls of thy posterity! Evermore they will praise in thy name, rejoice over thy just awards. What doth but thy glory inspire their strength? What else but thy favour bids us lift our hands? The help of the Lord, our King, the Holy One of Israel, is ours.

Long ago, in a vision, thou didst make a promise to thy faithful servants. To a warrior, thou saidst, I have confirmed your safety, chosen is our among the comrade folk a man to honour. How was my servant David; on him my anointing oil has been poured. My hand shall

<sup>1</sup> 'Thou hast framed a design of everlasting mercy,' literally, 'Thou hast said, Mercy shall be eternally built up.' The Hebrew verb has, 'I have said.'

<sup>2</sup> The word translated 'backstest' may, in the Hebrew, be a proper noun, *Kabash*, either meaning Force (as in B.C.), or personifying the principle of Chaos which was destroyed by the Creation (cf. *Gen. 1*).

<sup>3</sup> 'The sea' is the Hebrew text, 'the north wind.'

strengthen him, my arm shall give him courage; for in rage shall make a head against him, nor champion of wrong have power, henceforth, to injure him; I will crush the enemies that confront him, put all their armour to rest. My faithfulness and mercy shall go with him by my favour he shall rise to pre-eminence. I will make his power run as the sea, to the streams of the great river his head shall reach out.<sup>1</sup> Thou art my Father, he will cry out to me, thou art my God, my stronghold and my refuge; and I will acknowledge him as my first-born, overlord to all in the kings of earth. I will continue my mercy towards him for ever, my covenant with him shall remain unbroken; I will give him a periclype<sup>2</sup> that never fails, a chariot reaching to heaven itself. Do his children for a sake my law, instead of following the law I have given them; do they violate my decrees, neglect my commandments? Then I will punish their transgressions, scourge them for their sin, but I will not cancel my gracious promise to him; never will I be guilty of unfaithfulness, never will I violate my covenant, or alter the word once spoken. Once for all as I have sworn it on my holy throne, I will never be false to David; his periclype shall march to the east, his royalty, too, shall last on in my presence like the sun, like the moon's eternal orb, that beam witness in heaven unalterable.

And now? Now thou hast only laughing and scorn for me; thou dost refuse audience to him thou hast anointed. Thou hast annulled the covenant thou didst make with thy servants, dishonoured his royalty<sup>3</sup> in the dust, broken down all the walls about him, and thrown his stronghold into confusion: all he is plundered by every passer-by, as a laughing-stock to all his neighbours. Thou hast grieved aid to the enemy who conspire against him, triumph to all his enemies, doing the thrust of his sword, and denying him thy aid in battle. Thou hast robbed him of the bright glory<sup>4</sup> that once was his, thou hast cast down his throne to earth, cut short the days of his prosperity, and covered us him with shame.

Lord, wilt thou always turn away so obdurately, wilt the flame of a dip snuff ever be quenched? Remember how frail a thing I am, how brief the destiny of all Adam's race. Where is the man that can live on, and leave death untested; can ransom his life from the power of the world beneath? Lord, where are those enemies of an earlier time, promised so faithfully to David? Remember how a world's

<sup>1</sup> "The great river" is Euphrates, as in 71:4, 74:12.

<sup>2</sup> The Latin word used here is sometimes translated 'diadem' but refers, where kings are concerned, to their secret armours. In the Hebrew text, the word is 'crown.'

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'majesty.'

a teach small thy people, and this one heart must hear them all; the  
 mouth, Lord, of thy exalted, dwelling, in thy seat, the man whom thou  
 hast exalted!

10 Blessed be the Lord for ever. Amen, Amen.

PSALM 89

(74)

(A prayer of Moses, the man of God.)

1 **L**ORD, thou hast been our refuge from generation to generation.  
 Before the hills came to birth, before the whole frame of the  
 world was engendered, from eternity to eternity, O God, thou art.  
 And wilt thou bring man to nothing, that thou sayest, Enemies, children  
 of Adam, to what you went? In thy sight, a thousand years are but  
 as yesterday, that has come and gone, or as one of the night-watchings;  
 what is man's life-time, then, but a thing; not worth the reckoning?<sup>1</sup>  
 So be it; let him be grass that fades with the morning, blossom with  
 the morning, only to fade by evening in his drooping, all day and  
 withered. Sill the anger takes toll of us, thy displeasure denies us rest,  
 so isolate thy scrutiny of our wrong-doing, so clear our lives clean  
 in the light of thy presence. Day after day watches, and still thy anger  
 takes toll of us; the work of a life-time is only gone with.<sup>2</sup> What is our  
 span of days? Seventy years it lasts, eighty years, if lucky folk we be;  
 beyond that, all is toll and sorrow; and at last thy hand comes upon us to  
 mercy, for our correction.<sup>3</sup> Alas, that so few heed thy reproofs,  
 measure thy anger by the reverence we owe thee! With such correction  
 thou must needs assert thy power, chasten us and make us wise.<sup>4</sup>  
 11 Relent, Lord; must it be for ever? Be gracious to thy servants.  
 For as thy timely mercies, for us abiding happiness and content,  
 happiness that shall none for the time when thou shalt afflict us, for  
 the long years of ill fortune. Look upon thy servants, thy own faithful-

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'thou carriest them away like a flood; they become like a sleep.'

<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'Day after day is consumed through thy anger; we bring our years to an end like a sigh.'

<sup>3</sup> 'If we count among the harvest's the Lilies which possibly implies a reference to Gen. 3.1. The sense of the Hebrew text is, 'if they shall fulminate,' or perhaps if they are mighty, by means of our strength.' According to the same text, the last clause of the verse should mean, 'to fulfill it pains, and we are gone.'

<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew text is usually understood as meaning, 'And measure thy anger by the reverence we owe thee. Teach us so to count our days, that we may end by a wise hour.'

ing, and be the guide of their posterity;" brightly may the splendour of  
of the Lord shine upon us! Prosper our doings, Lord, prosper our  
doings yet.

## PSALM 90

(91)

(A song of praise for David.)

**H**ER who lives under the protection of the most High, under his  
heavenly care cannot be abided, can say to the Lord, Thou art my  
support and my stronghold, my God, in whom I trust. It is he that  
rescues me from every troublesome man, from every whisper of harm.<sup>1</sup>  
Sheltered under his arms, under his wings dwelling, thou art safe; his  
richness will throw a shield about thee. Nothing shalt thou have to  
fear from nightly terrors, from the arrow that flies by day-light, from a  
mobster that infests the darkness, from the assault of man or beast under  
the moon. Though a thousand fall at thy side, ten thousand at thy right  
hand, it shall never come near or near thee; rather, thy eyes shall look  
about thee, and see the reward of sinners.

Yea, Lord, thou art my hope, my soul, thou hast found a strong-  
hold in the most High.<sup>2</sup> There is no harm that can befall thee, no  
plague that shall come near thy dwelling. He has given charge to his  
angels concerning thee, to watch over thee whatsoever thou goest;  
they will hold thee up with their hands lest thou shouldst chance to  
trip on a stone. Thou shalt tread safely on asp and adder,<sup>3</sup> crush lion  
and serpent under thy feet.

He trusts in me, since it is to thank him; he acknowledges thy name, so  
from me he shall have protection: when he calls upon me, I will listen to  
in affliction I am at his side, to bring him safety and honour. Length  
of days he shall have to constant joy, and find in me deliverance.

<sup>1</sup> According to the Hebrew text, this verse means 'Show thy servants thy  
glory, and their children thy glory.'

<sup>2</sup> *ver. 9, 8.* The 'whisper of harm' and the 'mobster that infests the darkness'  
should be, according to the most probable interpretation of the Hebrew text,  
'the departing pestilence' and 'the pestilence that infests the darkness.' Accord-  
ing to the same text, 'the assault of man or beast' literally 'assault of the field'  
should be 'the destruction that lays waste.'

<sup>3</sup> The words 'my soul' are not in the original; they are inserted here so as to  
soften the sudden transition from a phrase addressed to God to one which is  
addressed to the Psalmist himself.

<sup>4</sup> For 'the asp' the Hebrew text has 'the lion.'

## PSALM 92

(92)

(A psalm-song on the sabbath day.)

**SURELY** it is to praise the Lord, to sing, most high God, in beauty  
 of thy name; to proclaim thy mercy and faithfulness at day-break  
 and at the fall of night. Here is a theme for son-strung harp and  
 viol, for music of voice and rithm; so delightful, Lord, is all thou  
 dost, so thrilling my heart at the sight of all thou hast made. How  
 magnificent is thy creation, Lord, how unsearchable are thy purposes  
 And still, we shall so learn, we strive to grasp his lessons, the wrong-  
 doer goes on in his busy wickedness. Still he thrives, still he makes  
 a harvest like the grain in spring, yet he is doomed to perish utterly,  
 while thou, Lord, art for ever seated on high. Vanished away thy  
 enemies, Lord, vanished away, and all their busy wickedness scattered  
 to the wind!

He gives me strength, that gives strength to the wild oxen; even  
 in my grey hairs his mercy is rich towards me.<sup>1</sup> Blessed are those  
 eyes with the sight of my creator<sup>2</sup> downfall, these eyes with the tidings  
 of innocent natives defiled. The innocent man will flourish as the  
 palm-tree flourish; he will grow to greatness as the cedar grow  
 on Lebanon. Planted in the temple of the Lord, growing up in the  
 very courts of our God's house, the innocent flourish in a green old  
 age, still in good heart;<sup>3</sup> theirs to proclaim how just is the Lord our  
 God, his dealings how clear of wrong.

## PSALM 92

(92)

(A psalm-song for David himself on the day before the sabbath, the day  
 on which the earth was established.)

**THE** Lord reigns as king, reful in majesty; royally the Lord has  
 his robe and girdle. He is who that founded the solid earth, so stable  
 and unmoveable. Firm stood thy throne ere over the world began; from all  
 eternity, thou art. Loud the rivers echo, Lord; loud the rivers echo

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, "So rich is the soil with which I am endowed."

<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew, "Will not the innocent yet flourish in old age, vigorous and fresh?"

stream that runs in flood, with a roar of eddying waters;<sup>2</sup> magnificent is the sea's rage; magnificent above these, the Lord reigns in heaven. How faithful, Lord, are thy precepts! Holy is thy house, and trust needs be holy until the end of time.

## PSALM 92

(94)

(A psalm of David's own, for the fourth day of the week.)

THE Lord is a God who takes vengeance, and now in vengeance he is made manifest. Judge of the world, mount thy throne, and give the proud their deserts! Must it be the sinners still, Lord, the sinners still that triumph? Shall there be no rest to the pining, the rebellious folk, the boundlessness of wrong-doers? See, Lord, how they crush down thy people, afflict the land of thy choice, smother the widow and the stranger, thy the orphan! And they think, The Lord will never see it, the God of Israel pays no heed. Pay heed, rather, yourselves, dull hearts that count among my people's fools, learn your lesson ere it is too late. Is he deaf, the God who implanted hearing in us; is he blind, the God who gave us eyes to see? He who punishes in nations, who taught men all that man knows, will he not call you to account? The Lord looks into men's hearts, and finds their illusion.

Happy, Lord, is the man whom thou dost choose, reading him the lessons of thy law! For him, thou wilt lighten the days of adversity, digging a pit all the while to trap the sinner. God will not abandon his people, will not desert his chosen land: ere long,<sup>3</sup> his justice will be manifest in judgement, claiming all upright hearts for its own. Who is risen my part against the oppressor? Who relies to my side against the wrong-doer? It is the Lord that helps me; but for that, the grave would soon be my resting-place. Still, when my foot-hold seemed lost, is thy mercy, Lord, held me up: would all the thronging cases that filled my heart, my soul chilled with thy consolation. What part have those unjust judges with thee? Thy punishments are for the breakers of thy law;<sup>4</sup> these plot against upright lives, it is the innocent they condemn to

<sup>1</sup> Literally 'in the midst of his perils', in comparison with the voice of many waters.<sup>2</sup> It is not certain whether these words should be taken with what goes before, or with what follows; the meaning of the Hebrew text is vague in either.

<sup>3</sup> This runs simply before, in the original, with the word 'and', but some words evidently must be supplied to make the connection of thought with what goes before.

<sup>4</sup> The Latin here runs, literally, 'Does the (judgement) cast of iniquity drive us then, then who dost favour righteous (or perhaps, only) in accordance with

is to death. In the Lord I find my stronghold, in my God's help I trust;  
 as he will punish the wrong *doers*, destroy them in their wickedness, do not  
 fear: the Lord our God will destroy them.

## PSALM 94

(75)

(A psalm-song of David's own.)

1 **C**OME, friends, rejoice in the Lord's banquet; cry we out for  
 gladness to God, our deliverer; the first to meet his presence with  
 a thanksgiving, greet him with a joyful psalm! A high God is the Lord,  
 a King high above all the gods;<sup>1</sup> beneath his hand lie the last branches  
 of earth, his are the mountain peaks; his the ocean, for who but he  
 created it? What other power fashioned the dry land? Come in, then,  
 all down before him, bow the knee; *plaud*<sup>2</sup> we with the God who made  
 us. Who but the Lord is our God? And what are we, but folk of his  
 pasturing, sheep that follow his beckoning hand?  
 4 Would you but listen to his voice to-day! Do not harden your hearts,  
 as they were hardened once when you provoked me, and put me to  
 a test, in the wilderness.<sup>3</sup> Your fathers put me to the test, challenged  
 me, and had proof of my power, for forty years together. From that  
 generation I turned away in loathing<sup>4</sup> Them, I said, are ever wayward  
 hearts, these have never learned to obey me. And I took an oath in  
 anger, They shall never attain my rest.<sup>5</sup>

percept? Some such rendering as that given above seems to be demanded by the context. Instead of 'they who do nothing,' the Hebrew text has 'which fulfils,' referring to the 'test of inquiry'; and the second half of the sentence is generally understood as meaning, 'which makes inquiry in law.'

<sup>1</sup> The Gallican Psalter, which is used in the liturgical collection of the psalm, adds at the end of this verse 'God will not abandon his people' (cf. 93.14).

<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'bowed down.'

<sup>3</sup> 'When you provoked me and put me to the test' in the Hebrew text, proper names may be understood here, 'at Horeb and at Marah' (Ex. 17.2).

<sup>4</sup> The Gallican Psalter has, 'When I freed them to that generation.'

<sup>5</sup> vs. 9-21. See Heb. 3.7-19.



## PSALM 95

(96)

(A song of David's men, when the house was being built after the captivity.)<sup>1</sup>

**SING** the Lord a new song, in the Lord's houses, let the whole earth make melody! Sing to the Lord, and bless his name; never cease praising record of his power to men. Publish his glory among the heathen; his wonderful acts for all the world to hear. How great is the Lord, how worthy of honour! What other god is to be feared as he? They are but idols<sup>2</sup> whom the heathen call divine; the Lord, our God, made the heavens. Honour and beauty wait on his presence; worship and magnificence are the attendants of his throne.

Lands of the heathen, make your offering to the Lord, an offering to the Lord of glory and praise, an offering of glory to the Lord's name; bring sacrifice, come into his courts, worship the Lord in his holy temple.<sup>3</sup> Before the Lord's presence let the whole earth bow in reverence, tell the heathen, The Lord is king now, he has put the world in order, never to be thrown into confusion more; he will give the nations a just award. Rejoice, heavens, and let earth be glad; let the sea, and all the sea contain, give thunderous applause. Sailing the fields, and all the flocks they bear; no tree in the forest but will rejoice to greet its Lord's coming. He comes to judge the earth; he goes the world to visit, to every man of men its promised award.

## PSALM 96

(97)

(For him, David, when his land was restored.)

**THE** Lord reigns as King, let earth be glad of it, let the furthest Isles rejoice! See where he sits, cloud and darkness about him, justice and right the pillars of his throne; see where he comes, fire sweeping on before him bounding up his enemies all around! In the flash of his

<sup>1</sup> This psalm is to be bound in a slightly altered form in I Par. 137. 29. and following. The 'sacrifice' referred to in the title is not that of Israel, but one of the Isles, which had been taken by the Philistines (I Kg. 8.21), and means we to have been a nation of worship for Israel until David brought it back to Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> The word used in the Hebrew text rather signifies nothingness, worthlessness.

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew text has 'in holy beauty,' (cf. Par. 18.24), some think the meaning is, 'in holy garments.'

lightning, how shines the world revealed; how earth trembles at the sight! The hills melt like wax at the presence of the Lord, at his Master's presence; the whole earth shrinks away.<sup>1</sup> The very heavens proclaim his faithfulness; no nation but has witnessed his glory. Shout upon the mountains worship carved images, and make their boast of false gods! None only all you powers of heaven praise him!

Glad news for Zion, rejoicing for Judah's townships, when thy judges come, Lord, are made known. Art thou not sovereign Lord of all the earth, beyond measure exalted above all gods? Lo now of thy Lord, hate the evil things, woe that are true to him he guards even, rescues them from the hand of the strong-deer. Dawn of hope for the innocent, dawn of gladness for the honest heart! Rejoice and triumph, just souls, in the Lord, of his holy name published everywhere the renown.

## PSALM 97

(21)

(A psalm of David's own.)

SING the Lord a new song, a song of wonder at his doings; how his own right hand, his own holy arm, brought him victory. The Lord has given proof of his saving power, has vindicated his just dealings, for all the nations to see. has remembered his gracious promise, and kept faith with the house of Israel; no corner of the world but has witnessed how our God can save. In God's honour let all the earth keep holiday; let all be song and rejoicing and fugal melody! Praise the Lord with the harp, the harp that has a psalm for its music; with trumpet of metal, and the organ of the trumping horn! Keep holiday in the presence of the Lord, our King: the sea with, and all that the sea holds, the world with, and all that dwell on it; the rivers with their applause, the hills, too, rejoicing to see the Lord come. He comes to judge the earth things the world justice, to every man of man his due award.

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, the last clause of this verse is most naturally rendered, 'in the presence of the Master of the whole earth.'

<sup>2</sup> Literally 'light has shined.' The Hebrew text has, 'light has been given.'

## PSALM 98

(99)

*(A psalm of David's own.)*

THE Lord is King; let the heathen quake as they will; he is throned  
 above the Cherubim; let the earth tremble before him.<sup>1</sup> Great  
 is the Lord who dwells in Zion, sovereign ruler of all peoples! Let them  
 all praise that great name of thine, a name terrible and holy. Doubt-  
 thy kindly heart loves justice; thou dost bring righteous to all, giving the  
 cause of Jacob down and upward. Praise, then, the Lord our God, and bow  
 down before his footstool; that, too, is holy.<sup>2</sup> Remember Moses and  
 Aaron, and all those princes of his, Samuel and those others who have  
 called on his name; how he throned to them when they called upon  
 him. His voice came to them from the pillar of cloud; faithfully they  
 kept the decrees, kept the command he gave them. And thou, O Lord  
 our God, didst lead them to them, and they found that a God of justice; yet  
 when they followed their own false counsels, thou wert quick to punish.<sup>3</sup>  
 Praise the Lord our God, and do worship at the holy mountain where  
 he dwells; the Lord our God is holy.

## PSALM 99

(100)

*(A psalm for thanksgiving.)*

LET the whole earth keep holiday to God's honour; pay to the  
 Lord the homage of your rejoicing, appear in his presence with  
 glad hearts. Learn that it is the Lord, no other, who is God; we did  
 not make ourselves, it was he that made us.<sup>1</sup> You that are his people,  
 sheep of his own pasturing, pass through these gates, enter those  
 courts of his, with hymns of praise; give him thanks, and bless his name.  
 Godless is the Lord, evanishing his wrath; age succeeds age, and he  
 is faithful to his promise still.

<sup>1</sup> The Latin here represents the mistake as being wary at the thought of God's sovereignty but the word used in the Hebrew that causes notice, 'be changed.'

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text may mean 'for he is holy' at the end of the verse.

<sup>3</sup> Literally 'those were (and) avenging (God) towards all those false counsels.' The sense of the verse is not altogether clear, and some commentators believe that the text is corrupt.

<sup>4</sup> There is a different tradition of the Hebrew text which gives, 'He made us, and we belong to him.' If this other tradition is right, it is best to join the rest of verse 3 to what precedes, rather than to what follows.

## PSALM 100

(101)

(A psalm of David's own.)

**O**F merriment and of joyous song shall be a psalm in thy house,  
 1 Lord, with a life of holiness for us therein. Ah, when wilt thou grant  
 me thy presence? Here in my house I would live! with unbroken heart;  
 2 no ill purpose clouding my view, the temptations of the law my  
 enemies. Never was false heart broken friend of mine, the wicked part  
 3 company with me, and are none of my acquaintance. From me, the  
 whisper of calumny wins no forgiveness; proud looks, and grasping  
 4 ambition, find no place at my table. To plain, honest folk I look for my  
 5 company; my servants are such as follow the path of innocence. No  
 welcome here for rebellious spirits, no standing in my presence for men  
 6 who talk deceitfully. Mine, are long, to root out from the land every  
 guilty soul, till I purge the Lord's city of all evil-doing.

## PSALM 101

(102)

(A prayer for the friendless man, when he is troubled, and is pouring  
out his petitions before the Lord.)

**O** LORD, hear my prayer, and let my cry come unto thee. Do  
 1 not turn thy face away from me, but lead me thy way in time  
 2 of affliction; give me swift audience whenever I call upon thee. See  
 how this life of mine passes away like smoke, how this frame wastes  
 3 like a burning faggot. Devoid of strength, like grass the sun scorches,  
 4 I leave my food uneaten, forgotten. I am spent with sighing, till my  
 5 skin clings to my bones. I am no better than a pelican out in the desert,  
 6 as evil as some ruined dwelling. I keep watch, lonely as a single  
 7 sentinel on the house top. All day long my enemies taunt me; even  
 8 those who were fastened me curse me now. Foes are all my food,  
 9 I drink nothing but what comes to me mingled with my tears; I shrink  
 before thy vengeful anger, as low thou hast brought me, who didst

\* This verse, and all the verses which follow, up to the end of the psalm, are given  
 by the Latin in a past tense, which seems meant to describe the daily before of  
 the psalmist. The Hebrew verbs in question may, however, be understood  
 as verbs referring to the future, describing what the course of the Psalmist's  
 life will be when 'God has "granted his presence." This last phrase is thought  
 by some commentators to mean the coming of the Ark to Jerusalem (II Kg. 8).

once lift me so high. Like a tapering shaften my days dwindle, wasting away, like grass in the sun!

Lord, thou endurest for ever, thy name, in the ages past, is not a beginning; surely thou wilt hear thyself, and give Zion relief! It is in time, now, to take pity on her, the hour has come. See how the servants long for even to rain, how they wait for dew with their want! Will not the haughty heart repentance, Lord, for thy glorious name, all these monarchs of the earth, when they hear that the Lord is here built Zion new, ready to be revealed thence in glory, that he has a given heed to the prayer of the afflicted, and answers their appeal as none? Such legend teaches us for a later age to reach a new people so that has come here being shall praise the Lord, the Lord who looks down as from his sanctuary on high, rising, as the Lord can, earth from heaven, bringing to the groans of the prisoners, delivering a man as that was doomed to die. There will he talk of the Lord's name in Zion, of his praise in Jerusalem, when peoples and kings meet there, as to pay the Lord their homage; has he not answered the prayer of his own people, come mightily to their aid?

Give me warning of the time I have left: do not roll me away suddenly, my life half done. Age after age thy years endure, it was thou, a Lord, that didst lay the foundation of earth when time began, it was thy hand that built the heavens. They will perish, but thou wilt remain; as they will all be like a cloth that grows, therefore, and thou wilt lay them aside like a garment, and exchange them for new; and thou, all the while, art what thou art, unchangeably, thy years can never fail. The power of thy servants shall yet have a home to dwell in; their sons shall thrive endlessly.

## PSALM 102

(103)

(For David himself.)

**B**LESS the Lord, my soul, unto, all my powers, to bless that holy Name. Bless the Lord, my soul, remembering all he has done for thee, how he pardons all thy sin, heals all thy mortal life, rescues thy life from deadly peril, crowns thee with the gifts of his kindness.

<sup>1</sup> The first half of this verse, in the Latin, means literally, 'he has answered him [ps. 101] in the journeying of his strength.' With this reading, it seems best to understand God as the subject, and his people (addressed to in verse 10) as God's answer to them from him. In the Hebrew text, the same is quite different, and the whole verse reads 'he has brought my strength according to another reading, he strength) me in the course of the journey, he has shortened my days.' The next verse begins, 'I have said, O my God, do not cut me away.' An

and compassion; how he concerns all thy desires for good, ransom thy youth, as the eagle's plumage is renewed. The Lord's acts are acts of mercy, to every wronged soul he gives release. The Lord, who told his servants, showed the sons of Israel his will!

How pitying and gracious the Lord is, how patient, how rich in mercy! He will not always be finding fault, his wrath does not last for ever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve, does not exact the penalty of our wrong-doing. High as heaven above the earth raises his mercy for the men that love him; far as the east is from the west, he cleans away our guilt from us. For his own worshippers, the Lord has a father's pity; does he not know the stuff of which we are made, can he forget that we are only dust? Man's life is like the grass, he blooms and dies like a flower in the field; once the hot wind has passed over it, it is no more, forgets the place where it grew.<sup>1</sup> But the Lord's worshippers know no beginning or end of his mercy; he will keep faith with their children's children, do they but hold fast by his covenant, stand firm mindful of his law. The Lord has set up his throne in heaven, makes wide universal way. Bless the Lord, all you angels of his, angels of sovereign strength, that carry out his commandments, attribute to no word he utters; bless the Lord, all you hosts of his, the servants that perform his will; bless the Lord, all you creatures of his, in every corner of his dominion; and thou, my soul, bless the Lord.

## PSALM 103

(104)

(For David himself.)

**B**LESS the Lord, my soul: O Lord my God, what magnificence in thy work! Glory and beauty are thy clothing. The light is a garment thou dost wrap about thee, the heavens a curtain thy hand unfold. Thus hast thou made it: so with the upper waters, the clouds are thy stairway; on the wings of the wind thou dost come and go. Thus wilt thou thy angels<sup>2</sup> be like the winds, the servants that wait on thee like a flame of fire.

The earth thou hast placed on its own firm base, undisturbed for all time. The deep was covered in, like a cloak; so low the waters

<sup>1</sup> The more probable meaning of the Hebrew text is, 'the place where it grew forgets it.'

<sup>2</sup> The word 'angels' in the Hebrew or in the Greek, might be translated 'messengers.' Some would translate the Hebrew text, 'who make themselves of the winds, servants out of the flaming fire.' See see Heb. 1.7, which phrase suggests the same great thought.

stand high above the mountains;<sup>1</sup> then cower before thy rebuking word, 1  
 for away at thy voice of thunder, leaving the mountain-brights to 2  
 rise, the valleys to sink into their appointed place! And to those waters 3  
 thou hast given a frontier they may not pass; never past they flow back,  
 and cover the earth again. Yet these shall be torrents flooding the glens, 4  
 warm-courses among the hills that give drink to every wild beast; 5  
 the hope of the wild asses in their thirst. The birds of heaven, too, 6  
 will nest beside them, and the rattle vults with their mate.

From the divine store-house comes rain to water the hills; it is 7  
 thy hand gives earth the plenty she enjoys. Grass must grow for the 8  
 cattle; these faithful servants of man must have their fresh food, if 9  
 thou art to bring them out of the earth. If there is to be winter that will 10  
 rejoice man's heart, oil to make his face shine, and bread that will 11  
 keep man's strength from failing. Moreover, too, for the forest trees,<sup>2</sup> 12  
 for the cedars of Lebanon, from of the Lord's own planting. Here 13  
 it is the birds build their nests, with the cyrcs of the north overlapping 14  
 them all, refuge each in the deer find in the high hills, the hedge-hog 15  
 in its cove.

We should have the moon for our calendar; the sun knows well 16  
 the hour of his setting. Thou dost decree darkness, and the night 17  
 falls; in the night all the forest is astir with prowling beasts; the young 18  
 lions go roaring after their prey, God's providence, asking for their 19  
 food. Then the sun rises, and they rest to lie down in their dens, 20  
 while man goes abroad to toil and dredge all the evening. What a 21  
 diversity, Lord, is thy creature! What wisdom has designed them 22  
 all. There is nothing on earth but gives proof of thy sovereignty. 23

There lies the vast ocean, stretching wide on every hand; this, too, 24  
 is peopled with living things past number, great creatures and small;  
 the ships pass there on their course, Leviathan himself is among them; 25  
 he, too, thou hast created to roam there at his pleasure.<sup>3</sup> And all 26  
 we look to thee to send them their food at the appointed time; it is through 27  
 thy gift they find it, thy hand opens, and all are filled with content.  
 But see, thou hidest thy face, and they are dismayed; thou takest their 28  
 life from them, and they howl; no more, go back to the dust they 29  
 came from. Then thou sendest forth thy spirit, and there is fresh 30  
 creation; thou dost repopulate the face of earth.

Glorify be to the Lord for ever, the Lord who takes delight in his 31

<sup>1</sup> See Gen. 1.9.

<sup>2</sup> "The forest trees" in the Hebrew text, "the trees of the Lord."

<sup>3</sup> It is possible to read another sense, whether in the Hebrew, in the Greek, or in the Latin text, that God has made the whale for whatever creature Leviathan represented to a Jew for his own enjoyment.

is creature. One glance from him makes earth tremble; at his touch,  
 is the mountains are wreathed in smoke. While life lasts, I will sing  
 in the Lord's honour; my praise shall be his while I have breath to praise  
 is him; Oh, may this paper with him find acceptance in whom is all my  
 is comfort! Perish all sinners from the land, let the wrong-doers be for-  
 gotten! But thou, my soul, bless the Lord.

## PSALM 104

(105)

(Altilia.)

**PRAISE** the Lord, and call upon his name; tell the story of his  
 1 **deeds** for all the nations to hear;<sup>1</sup> greet him with song and psalm,  
 2 recount his acts of miracle. Triumph in that holy name; let every heart  
 3 that hangs for the Lord rejoice. To the Lord be ascribe you, and to him  
 4 his strength, evermore ascribe his greatness. Remember the marvel-  
 5 lous acts he did, his miracles, his sentences of doom; are you not the  
 6 posterity of Abraham, his own servant, sons of that Jacob on whom  
 7 his choice fell? And he, the Lord, is our own God, wide though his  
 8 work runs through all the world. He keeps in everlasting memory that  
 9 covenant of his, that promise which a thousand generations might not  
 10 cancel. He gave Abraham a promise, bound himself to Isaac by an oath;  
 11 by that law Jacob should live, his Israel, bound to him with an eternal  
 12 covenant. To thee, he said, I will give the land of Canaan, as the  
 13 portion which thou and thine must one day inherit. So few they were  
 14 in number; only a handful, being there as strangers. And ever they  
 15 passed on from country to country, the guests of King or people; but  
 16 he suffered none to harm them;<sup>2</sup> to kings themselves the waving hand  
 17 lay no hand on them, never hurt them, remains unincised and true  
 18 spokesman of mine.  
 19 And now he brought famine on the land, cutting off all their supply  
 20 of bread. But he had sent an envoy to prepare the way for them, that  
 21 very Joseph, who was sold as a slave. Grief-stricken his feet had been  
 22 galled in the stocks, till the iron pierced his very soul; but he proved  
 23 a true prophet at last, when an oracle from the Lord inspired him.<sup>3</sup> Then  
 the king sent to release him, the proud ruler of many peoples set him

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, the word *Altilia* is the last word of the psalm preceding this, of this psalm, and of the psalm which follows.

<sup>2</sup> See Gen. 22, 23.

<sup>3</sup> See Gen. 40, 41. "Inspired him"; literally "inflamed him"; the Hebrew text here is generally rendered "the word of the Lord tried him as if by fire."



free, and appointed him master of his household, lord of all the power—since that were his. Joseph should teach his courtiers to be as Joseph is was;<sup>1</sup> should train his aged counsellors in wisdom. So it was that Israel came into Egypt, that Jacob dwelt as an alien in the country of Cham.

Time passed, and he gave his people great increase of substance, so all it remembered all its evils, and so changed their hearts, that they grew weary of his people, and were malicious enemies to those, his worshippers. Then he sent his servant Moses, and Aaron the son of his sister, to be the authors of those signs, those miracles in which the country of Cham would witness. Dark night he sent to a bright day, still keeping his word there in season.<sup>2</sup> He turned all their supply of water into blood, killing all the fish; frogs swarmed as out of their land, even in their royal palace; at his word, flies attacked them, gnats, too, all their land over; hail was the ruin he gave them, and so it brought fire that burned up their countryside, till he had scattered in their vine and fig-tree, broken down all the wood that grew in their domains. He gave the weed, and locusts came, grasshoppers, too, as fast all numbering, eating up all the grass in their country, eating as up all the crops their land yielded. Then, his hand fell upon Egypt's first-born, on the first-fruits of all they had expended; and so he brought his people out, enriched with silver and gold, no foot that stumbled among all their allies.

Glad indeed was Egypt at their going, each fear of them had overcome taken it. He spread out a cloud to cover them, that turned to fire in the darkness, lighting their journey. Quails came, when they asked so for flesh; he satisfied their desire, too, with bread from heaven, and so placed the rock so that water flowed down, running streams in the wilderness. So well did he remember that holy promise of his, made as to her servant Abraham: in joy and triumph he led them out, his chosen as people, and gave them the lands of the heathen for their own. Those, as we all George Hardy had filled, his commandments should be kept sacred, his law should reign.

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'and his courtiers as his (Joseph's) phanias.'

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text has, in the second half of this verse, 'and they did not rebel against his word.' This sense is difficult, and the Syro-chaldee Greek gives, 'and they rebelled against his word.' The Latin appears to mean 'and he did not maintain his words,' a form of phrase which occurs nowhere else, and seems here misapprehended as above.

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**P**RAISE the Lord, the Lord is gracious; his mercy endures for ever: what tongue can recount all the great deeds of the Lord, can praise all his power? Blessed are they who abide ever by his decrees, never do the right. Remember us, Lord, with loving thoughts towards thy people, come among us with thy saving power, to witness the prosperity of thy chosen servants, to share the happiness of thy people, to glory in the glory of thy own inheritance.

We have taken part in our fathers' sin; we are guilty men, rebels against thee. So it was with our fathers in Egypt, unrepentant, thy wonderful doings, unremembered, thy abundant mercies; even at the Red Sea's brink they must prove rebellious. Yet, for his own honour, to make known his power, he delivered them, smothering the Red Sea, so that it dried up, and leading them through its depths as safely as if they waded the desert sands. From a cruel enemy's grasp he rescued them, delivered them for his own, and the water overwhelmed their oppressors, till not one of them was left. They believed, then, in his promises, sang songs, then, in his honour, but soon they forget what he had done, and could not wait for the accomplishment of his will. They must needs give way to their cravings in the wilderness, challenge God's power, there in the desert, till he granted their demand, and played a their appetites with satiety.<sup>1</sup> Faction raised its head in the camp against Moses, against Aaron, whom the Lord had appointed; and now earth gaped, swallowing up Dathan, overwhelming Abiram and his company, so that none was left in their company, and the rebels perished by its fumes. They made a calf, too, at Horeb, moulding an image and worshipping it, as if they would exchange the glory that dwelt among them for the semblance of a heifer at grass. So little they remembered the God who had delivered them, those portents of his in Egypt, strange things seen in the land of Cham, terrible things done by the Red Sea! What wonder if he threatened to make an end of them? But Moses, the man of his choice, stood in the breach to confront his anger, to ward off destruction.

And now they poured scorn on the head of their deity, destruction

<sup>4</sup> 'To witness' in the Latin has the sense of 'that thou mayest witness'; the Hebrew text (which has 'witnessed me' above, instead of 'witnessed us') more correctly means 'that I may witness.'

• **“Society”** in the Webster case: “society”

his promise; and the camp was all disfection. So the Lord, finding they would not listen to his voice, lifted his hand and threatened to make them down, there in the wilderness, to make them the lowest of the people, weaker than straw among the nations of the world. They dedicated themselves to idolatry, in honour of the dead gods not drawn to dust; till their wicked ways roused God's anger, and a fierce plague befell upon them. Nor might the destruction cease, till Pharaoh rose up and made amends, winning himself such title to God's favour as shall be remembered, age after age, eternally. They provoked his anger, too, as in the waters of Meribah, so that Moses was punished for their sake; because in his heart's bitterness, he broke out into open complaint.

Not their to rest our the heathen, as the Lord had bidden them; as they mingled with the heathen learned, and learned their ways; were shipping carved images of alien gods, as their own making, sacrificing to their sons and daughters in honour of devils. Innocent blood, the blood of their own sons and daughters, was poured out in worship to the idols of Chanaan; with blood the whole land was polluted, as it became the guilt of its people, as warren their ways. Then God's anger was kindled up against his people, his chosen race became abominable to him, and he handed them over to the Gentiles, to serve hated masters; they were oppressed by their enemies, bowed down under the yoke. Again and again he brought them deliverance, but ever as there were fresh shifts to provide him, there was fresh guilt to drag them in the dust. And still, when he saw their distress, when he heard their appeals to him, he brought him of his covenant, and in his great mercy would relent; their very captives should be moved to pity them.

Deliver us, O Lord our God, and gather us again, scattered as we are among the heathen, to praise thy holy name, to triumph in thy name. Blessed be the God of Israel from all eternity to all eternity; as let all the people cry, Amen, Amen.

## PSALM 105

(147)

(Alleluia.)

**PRAISE** the Lord, the Lord is gracious; his mercy endureth for ever; he took the cry of men the Lord has noticed, rescued them from the enemy's hand, and gathered them in from far-off countries, from evening and sunset, from northern lands and from the sea.

Some have wandered in parched deserts, missing the way to the city that was their home, hungry and thirsty, so that their spirits

- 1 died within them. So they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and  
 2 he relieved their distress, guiding them safely to the place where they  
 3 should find a home. Praise be to the Lord in his mercies, in his wondrous  
 4 dealings with mortal men; 5 poor souls that were thirsty, quenched now,  
 6 poor souls that were hungry, satisfied now with all good.  
 7 Some lay in darkness, overcast with the shadow of death, helpless  
 8 in bonds of iron; their punishment for rebelling against God's decrees,  
 9 his thwarting the will of the most High. Their hearts bowed down  
 10 with sorrow, none else to aid their mortal weakness, they cried out  
 11 to the Lord in their trouble, and he relieved their distress, rescuing  
 12 them from darkness, from death's shadow, tearing their chains asunder.  
 13 Praise be to the Lord in his mercies, in his wondrous dealings with  
 14 mortal men: the Lord who has shattered the gates of brass, ripped the  
 15 bonds of iron.  
 16 Some for their very flesh must needs be humbled; from their eyes  
 17 a gulf's consequence heaved them: 18 they lay sick, with no stomach  
 19 for food, 19 close to death's door. So they cried out to the Lord in their  
 20 trouble, and he relieved their distress, giving the command that they  
 21 should be healed, and saving them from their peril. Praise be to the  
 22 Lord in his mercies, in his wondrous dealings with mortal men; 23  
 24 to offer him sacrifice in thanksgiving, and proclaim joyfully what  
 25 he has done for them.  
 26 Some there were that roamed abroad in ships, trafficking over the  
 27 high sea; 28 these are men that have witnessed the Lord's designs, his  
 29 wonderful doings amid the deep. At his word the stormy wind rose,  
 30 churning up its waves; high up towards heaven they were carried, then  
 31 sank into the trough, with spirits fainting in their peril; see them reeling  
 32 and staggering to and fro as a drunken drow, all their seamanship  
 33 forgotten! So they cried out to the Lord in their trouble and he relieved  
 34 their distress, 35 sailing the storm into a eddy, all at once were  
 36 quiet. Glad hearts were theirs, when calm fell down; 37 these, and he  
 38 brought them to the haven where they longed to be. Praise be to the

<sup>1</sup> Here, and elsewhere, the Hebrew text probably means, 'For them [the women] give thanks to God for his mercy and his wonders'; but the Latin version seems to pervert the mercy and the wonders, directing them to give thanks to God.

<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'Took are brought low because of their wrong-doing and of their guilt'; but some think the original must mean 'have been "licked" (except of "licks")'. In any case it is clear that this mention of the pains dealt with what is unknown, and (in the Latin) 'from the way of their own guilt' must be understood as meaning 'from the punishment of their own guilt' perhaps on the analogy of passages like Isa. 54.6.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'their soul lacked every kind of food.'

Lord in his majesty, in his wondrous dealings with mortal man; let us then extol his name, where the people gather together, glorify him where the elders sit in council. Now, he came from the desert, with a land dry ground; land that once was fruitful has a salty marsh, to a puzzle to people's guilt. There, he changes the wilderness into pools of water, desert ground into springs; and satiates hungry folk as there, so that they build themselves a city to dwell in, sow fields, and plant vineyards, and reap the harvest; he blesses them, so that in their numbers increase beyond measure, and takes no toll of their cattle. Here, men grow few, and are worn down by stress of food and ill forage;<sup>1</sup> more overtake them now, those proud chieftains, as he keeps them wandering in a barren desert. There, he makes as the poor from seed, their households thrive like their own flocks. Houser men will rejoice to witness it, and nations will stand dumb with confusion. Good is well, if thou wouldst be wise; be thou thy a study, the marvels of the Lord.

## PSALM 107

(108)

(A psalm-song of David's own.)

A HEART to serve thee, O God, a heart ready to serve thee; I will sing of thee and praise thee with all my skill. Take, all my skill, words, voices of harp and string drawn shall find me working. Let me give thanks, Lord, for all the world to hear it, sing praises while the Gentiles listen, of thy mercy, high above heaven itself, of thy kindness, that reaches the clouds! O God, mount high above the heavens,<sup>2</sup> all thy glory overshadows the whole earth. Now, bring aid to the man that loves, give my prayer answers, and lift thy right hand to save. God's word came to us from his sanctuary: in triumph I will divide up Sichern, and parcel out the valley of Tabor; to me Gilgal, to me Hazazon belongs; Ephraim is my helmet, Jude issues my commands. Moab, one day, shall be my drudge; over Edom I will do as my right, God says the Philistines will bow before me. Such was the oracle, but now who is to lead me on my march against this fortress,

<sup>1</sup> This verse reads at first sight as if it had the same following: *wherever* to the same people who are mentioned in verse 91. But the context seems to demand that they should be the people mentioned in verse 92 (which is really part of the same sentence). The whole of this concluding paragraph shows the contrast between God's treatment of the pious and his treatment of the apostate.

<sup>2</sup> *Is.* 54-5. See *Ps.* 95:3-12.

12 who is to find an heirloom for our lost Elion, when thou, O God, hast  
 13 discovered us, and wilt not go into battle with our armies? It is thou that  
 14 must deliver us from peril; ours is the help of none. Only through God  
 can we fight victoriously; only he can triumph our oppressors in the dust.<sup>1</sup>

## PSALM 108

(189)

(To the end, for David, a psalm.)

1 O GOD, do not leave my good name unfathered; there are malicious  
 2 lips, treacherous lips, that deny me. False tongues are whispering  
 against me, bridling me about with a conspiracy of liars, in unprovoked  
 3 attack. On their side, all solemnity is turned for love, no miles all prayer;  
 4 kindness is repaid with injury, love with ill will.  
 5 Give him over to the power of wickedness, let an evil spirit<sup>2</sup> stand  
 6 at his right hand to accuse him; let him leave the court of judgment.  
 7 A devoted man, every prayer of his reckoned as guilt. Swiftly let his  
 8 days come to an end, and his effort be converted to another's<sup>3</sup> oppression  
 9 for the children, widowhood for the wife! Far let his weeping children  
 10 wander to beg; their bread, called from home, while cruel men eagerly  
 11 come up his possessions, and strangers divide the fruits of his toil.  
 12 May no friend be left to take his part, none to have pity on his defence;  
 13 let him, a speedy end to his race, deliver for his name before a great  
 14 and strong people! Still may the sin of his father be remembered in the  
 15 Lord's sight, his mother's guilt remain indelible; still may the Lord  
 16 keep in his mind, and wipe out their memory from the earth. Did he  
 17 himself keep mercy in mind, when he persecuted the helpless, the  
 18 destitute, the grief-stricken, and mastered them down for death? Cursing  
 19 he loved, and a curse shall come upon him for blessing he cursed little,  
 20 and blessing shall keep its distance from him. Cursing was the legacy  
 of his choice; it sunk like water into his lowest being, soaked, like oil,  
 into the marrow of his bones! Now let it be the garb he wears, cling to  
 him like a girdle that he can never take off!<sup>4</sup>

21 Such are the men<sup>5</sup> that calculate me in the Lord's presence, the

<sup>1</sup> See Ps. xcvi. 9.<sup>2</sup> 'An evil spirit,' the Hebrew word may also be translated simply 'an enemy.'<sup>3</sup> See, e.g.,<sup>4</sup> In the Hebrew text, all the verbs of this verse express a wish for the future. It is possible to understand these verses (ps. 108-19) as an *oratio*, and to try the Psalter, too, of the Psalter by his dominion.<sup>5</sup> Literally, 'these are the deluge of the men.' Some would translate the Hebrew here 'This is the consequence of the men'; but the word here used, though it sometimes means 'result,' is nowhere else found in the sense of 'consequence.'

man that delivers me so quickly. But do thou, my Lord and Master, to take my part, so defend thy own honour; no mercy is so tender as thine. Deliver me in my helpless need; my heart is discouraged within a me. Like a vapour shadow I depart, vanish away like a mist on the wing. My knees are weak with fasting, my strength plucks away as a withered.<sup>1</sup> They make a laughing-stock of me, and as one in derision as they pass by. Help me, O Lord my God; deliver me to thy mercy; as prove to them that my woes are a visitation from thee, sent by thy hand but thine. Bless me, O Lord, and let them come as they will; dis-appoint my adversaries, and grant thy servant relief. Let them, my adversaries, be covered with shame, wrapped in the mantle of their own confusion. Loudly will I give the Lord thanks, praise him before a multitude that living, the Lord who has stood at the right hand of the fatherless, brought redress to an innocent soul misjudged.

## PSALM 109

(112)

(For David; a psalm.)

TO the Master I serve the Lord's promise was given, sit here at my right hand while I make thy enemies a footstool under thy feet. The Lord will make thy enemies spring up like a branch out of Sion; thou art to bear rule in the midst of thy enemies. When thou shalt send thy power, thine enemies shall be thine;<sup>2</sup> amid the splendour of the holy place; thou art my son, born before the daystar rose. The Lord has sworn as with thee is no retracting. Thou art a priest for ever in the line of Melchisedek.<sup>3</sup> At thy right hand, the Lord bears down kings in the day of his vengeance; he will pain sentence on the nations, and accomplish their ruin; smelt a well-peopled land<sup>4</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Untranslated literally for the sake of all' either in the sense of 'helpless,' or because the Psalmist was dropping himself the use of all while keeping a fast.

<sup>2</sup> This psalm, the meaning of which is in my case obscure, is further confused in the Latin, and in the Syriac and Greek, for the use of the same rendering for two different words in the Hebrew, both translated by 'Lord' and 'Master' respectively. Cf. Mt. 22.42; Mt. 22.36; Lk. 20.42; Ac. 2.34.

<sup>3</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'my people offers itself willingly.' Some would translate the words which follow, 'In holy garments,' it is possible that there was a transcription error, and the original line ran, 'upon the holy mountain.' The second half of the verse, as it is given in the Hebrew text, is traditionally rendered 'the sword of thy faith is at the mouth of the morning,' a phrase of which many different explanations have been given.

<sup>4</sup> See Heb. 1.8, and elsewhere.

<sup>5</sup> Some think that the Hebrew text contains a proper name, 'in the land of Babylon' the capital of Assyria.

1 *cast down in prison. Let him free drink of the brook by the way-side,  
he will lift up his head in victory.*<sup>1</sup>

## PSALM 119

(111)

(Alphabet.)

1 **A**LL my heart goes out to thee, Lord, in thanksgiving, before  
2 the assembly where the just are gathered. Glorious are the Lord's  
3 wonderful doings, decreed to fulfil all his purposes.<sup>2</sup> Ever his deeds are  
4 high and glorious, faithful he abides to all eternity. Great deeds, that  
5 he keeps still in remembrance! How kind the Lord is, how merciful!  
6 If man will fear him, still he feeds them, keeping his covenant unfor-  
7 gotten. Lordly the power he showed his people, smiting the heads of  
8 the heathen their possession. No act but shows him just and faithful;  
9 of his decrees there is no shaming. Perpetual store shall have them  
10 champions; right and truth are their foundations. So he has brought  
11 his people deliverance to all eternity stands his covenant. Unchangeable  
12 is his name and nobility; vain without his face is learning. Wise over-  
13 moses are you who follow in; yours the prize that lasts for ever.

## PSALM 111

(112)

(Alphabet of the return of Aggeus and Zachary.)

1 **A**BLESSED man is he, who fears the Lord, bearing great love to  
2 his commandments. Children of his shall win renown in their  
3 country do right, and thy sons shall find a blessing. Blessed dwells  
4 with such a man, and great prosperity; fears shall ever record his beauty.<sup>3</sup>  
5 Good man set a light down in darkness; his light, wise is ever merciful,  
6 kind and faithful. It goes well with the man who leads in piety; justice  
7 shall be found in all his proceedings. Length of days shall have him still

<sup>1</sup> There is an agreement as to the precise meaning of this verse, some would render, 'they will drink,' understanding the first half as an ironic reference to the prisoners being disappointed by the final state.

<sup>2</sup> 'Decreed to fulfil all his purposes' the Hebrew text is usually rendered, 'hatched out by those who delight in them.'

<sup>3</sup> In the first half of this verse, the Hebrew text has 'There is affluence and prosperity in his household.'



revelation; men will remember the name of the just for ever. No fear  
 shall be here of evil tidings; on the Lord his hope is fixed unchangeably.  
 Patient his heart remains and steadfast, quietly he waits for the downfall  
 of his enemies. Rich are his days to the needy; still, through the years,  
 his bounty abides in memory.<sup>2</sup> The Lord will lift up his head in triumph,  
 and godly men are ill content to see it. Vainly they push their south in a  
 covey; worldly hopes must fade and perish.

## PSALM 112

(112)

(Akkedah.)

**P**RAISE the Lord, you that are his servants, praise the name of  
 the Lord together. Blessed be the Lord's name at all times, from  
 this day to all eternity; from the sun's rise to the sun's setting let the  
 Lord's name be praised continually. The Lord is sovereign king over  
 all the nations; his glory is high above the heavens. What is like the  
 Lord our God, so high above us, that stoops to regard lowly things  
 in heaven and earth, lifting up the poor man from the dust to lay  
 in, hiding the beggar from his deep-bell, to find him a place among  
 the princes, the prince that rule over his people? He gives the barren  
 woman a home to dwell in, a mother rejoicing in her children.

## PSALM 113

(113)

(Akkedah.)

**W**HEN Israel came out of Egypt, and the sons of Jacob heard no  
 more a strange language, the Lord took Juda for his sanctuary,  
 Israel for his own dominion. The sons fled at the sight they discerned,  
 backward flowed the stream of Jordan; up-leapt, like rams, the startled  
 mountains, up-leapt the hills, like yearling stags. What ailed you,  
 sea, that you fled in terror Jordan's stream, what drove thee back?  
 Why did you leap up like rams, you mountains, leap up, you hills,  
 like yearling stags? The whole earth thrilled at its Master's presence;  
 it was he that came, the God of Jacob, who turned the rock into pools  
 of water, the flint-stone into a springing well.

<sup>2</sup> II Cor. 9.8.

(113)

1 Not to us, Lord, not to us the glory; let thy name alone be glorified;  
 2 thine the successful, thine the deliver'd; why must the heathen say, Their  
 3 God deserts them? Our God is a God that dwells in heaven; all that he  
 4 will designs, he executes. The heathen have silver idols and golden,  
 5 god which the hands of men have fashioned. They have mouths, and  
 6 yet are silent; eyes they have, and yet see nothing; ears they have, and  
 7 want all hearing; noses, and yet no smell can reach them; hands un-  
 8 feeling, feet unfeeling; never a sound their throats may utter. Such be  
 9 the end of all who make them, such the reward of all who trust them.  
 10 It is the Lord that gives hope to the race of Israel, their only help, their  
 11 only stronghold; the Lord that gives hope to the race of Aaron, their  
 12 only help, their only stronghold; the Lord that gives hope to all who  
 13 fear him, their only help, their only stronghold. The Lord keeps us in  
 14 mind, and grants us blessing; drives the race of Israel, blesses the race  
 15 of Aaron; all those who fear the Lord, small and great alike, he blesses.  
 16 Still may the Lord grant you increase, you and your children after you;  
 17 the blessing of the Lord be upon you. It is he that made both heaven  
 18 and earth; to the Lord belongs the heaven of heavens, the earth he gives  
 19 to the children of men. From the dead, Lord, thou hast no praises, the  
 20 man who go down into the place of silence; but we bless the Lord, we,  
 the living, from this day to all eternity.

PSALM 114

(114.1-9)

(Alleluia.)

MY heart is affraid, as graciously the Lord listens to my prayer;  
 1 in the Lord, who grants me audience, I will offer prayer all my  
 2 life long. Death's pang about me, overtaken by all the terrors of  
 3 the grave, ever I found distress and grief at my side. Till I called upon  
 4 the Lord, Save me, Lord, in my peril. Merciful the Lord is, and full,  
 5 and full of pity; he cares for simple hearts, and to me, whom I lay  
 6 lowliest, he brought deliverance. Return, my soul, where thy praise  
 7 fits; the Lord has dealt kindly with thee; he has saved my life from  
 8 peril, banished my fears, kept my feet from falling. I will be the Lord's  
 servant henceforward in the land of the living.

## PSALM 113

(113.10-19)

(Akkedah.)

**I** THOUGHT, and craving fumed words to utter in my abasement,  
 I considered, I said, Man's faith is false; but the Lord's wonders  
 have never failed me; what return shall I make to him? I will take  
 the cup that is pledge of my deliverance, and invoke the name of the  
 Lord upon it; I will pay the Lord my vows in the presence of all his  
 people. Dear is the Lord's sight: is the death of those who love him,  
 and am not I, Lord, thy servant, born of thy own handmaid? Thou  
 hast broken the chains that bound me; I will sacrifice in thy house,  
 and call on the name of the Lord. Before a throng of worshippers  
 I will pay the Lord my vows, here in the courts of the Lord's house,  
 as here, Jerusalem, in thy heart.

## PSALM 114

(117)

(Akkedah.)

**P**RAISE the Lord, all ye Gentiles, for all the nations of the world  
 do him honour. Abundant has his mercy been towards me; for  
 the Lord remains faithful to his word for ever.

## PSALM 117

(118)

**G**IVE thanks to the Lord; the Lord is gracious, his mercy endures  
 for ever. Echo the cry, stretch the Lord is gracious, his mercy  
 endures for ever. His mercy endures for ever, echo the cry, voice of  
 Aaron: his mercy endures for ever, echo the cry, all you who are the  
 Lord's worshippers. I called on the Lord when trouble beset me, and  
 the Lord listened, and brought me relief. With the Lord to aid me,  
 I have no fear of the worst man can do; with the Lord to aid me, I  
 shall not see the fall of my enemies. Better trust the Lord than rely on

<sup>1</sup> *sq. 113.* The verse here is obscure, and much disputed. It is usually supposed that what the Psalmist said comes to an end with *verse 11*; but it is difficult to see how this could be described as a *confession* (verse 10a) *II Cor. 4.15*, and it seems better to take *verse 11*, and part of the words of what follows, as falling within the quotation.

- 1 the help of man; better trust the Lord than rely on the word of princes.  
 2 For all benefactors cling me round, yet, in the power of the Lord I crush  
 3 them! They cut me off from every way of escape, but see, in the power  
 4 of the Lord I crush them! They revile about me like bees, their fury  
 5 likens up like fire among thorns, but see, in the power of the Lord I  
 6 crush them. I creaked under the blow, and had well-nigh fallen, but still  
 7 the Lord was there to aid me. What but the Lord is my protector, the  
 8 pillar of my song; who but the Lord has brought me deliverance?  
 9 The houses of the just rejoice, now, with glad cries of victory; the  
 10 power of the Lord has triumphed. The power of the Lord has brought  
 11 me to great honour, the power of the Lord has triumphed. I am  
 12 relieved from death, to live on and proclaim what the Lord has done  
 13 for me. The Lord has chastened me, chastened me indeed, but he  
 14 would not doom me to die. Open me the gates whose right dweller;  
 15 let me go in and thank the Lord! Here is the gate that leads to the  
 16 Lord's presence; here shall just souls find entry. Thanks be to thee,  
 17 O Lord, for giving me audience, thanks be to thee, my deliverer. The  
 18 very ones which the builders rejected has become the chief corner  
 19 at the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our  
 20 eyes! This day is a holiday of the Lord's own, shouting great this day  
 21 with rejoicing, great this day with triumph!  
 22 Deliverance, Lord, deliverance! Lord, great as days of prosperity!  
 23 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! A blessing from  
 24 the Lord's house upon your company! The Lord is God; his light  
 25 shines out to welcome us; acknowledge this day, with a shout of triumph  
 26 that reaches to the very horns of the star! These art my God, mine to  
 27 acknowledge thee, these art my God, mine to extol thee; shouting thee for  
 28 giving me audience, thanking thee, my deliverer! Give thanks to  
 the Lord: the Lord is gracious, his mercy endures for ever.

## PSALM 118

(118)

**A**M. Blessed they, who pass through life's journey untried, who  
 1 follow the law of the Lord! Ah, blessed they who study his  
 2 decrees, make him the whole quest of their hearts! As for the strong-

<sup>1</sup> 22, 23, 25. Ms. 22-23.

<sup>2</sup> The interpretation of this verse, in the Hebrew text, is uncertain. Some would render, "And the saviour with us, draw us to the horns of the star." The rendering in the Latin version entirely supports an allusion to the Jews of the "Ephraimite" (Jer. 31.20).

<sup>3</sup> The repetition of verse 22 appears in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text as we have it.

doors, they leave his ways uncredited. Above all else it binds us, the charge thou has given us to keep. Ah, how shall my steps be surely guided to keep faith with thy covenant? Attentive to all thy commandments, I go my way unhesitating. A true heart's worship thou shalt love, thy just awards preoccupying me. All shall be done as thy love decreed, so thou wilt not forsake me utterly.

Best shall be keep his vows unstinted, who is true to thy trust. Be thou the whole quest of my heart; never let me turn aside from thy commandments. Buried deep in my heart, thy warnings shall keep me clear of sin. Blessed art thou, O Lord, teach me to know thy will. By those lips let the awards thou makest ever be recorded. Richer as one that has found great possessions, I follow thy decrees. Reckoning me still of the charge thou givest, I will mark thy foot-steps. Be thy covenant ever in my thoughts, thy words kept in memory.

Covers thy servant with life, to live faithful to thy commands. Clear is sight to mine, to comprehend the wisdom of thy law. Certain this surely will do not refuse me the knowledge of thy will. Crushed is like my spirit, longing ever for thy just awards. Charmer of the proud, is thy name fit on all who sever from thy covenant. Clear me of the reproach that shame me, as I was once attentive to thy claims. Cleared is region, prison plot against me, thy servant, that thinks only of thy decrees. Claims lovingly cherished, decree that are my remembered.

Keep fit my soul in the just, restore life to me, as thou hast promised. Deign, now, to show me thy will, thou who hast listened when I opened my heart to thee. Direct me in the path thou biddest me to follow, and all my craving shall be of thy wonderful deeds. Dispatch as wings that drive me; let thy promises take me up once more. Deliver me from every false thought; let thy covenant be my comfort. Day's is path my chosen, I keep thy bidding ever in remembrance. Disappoint is me, Lord, never, one that holds fast by thy commandments. Do but open my heart wide, and say like the path thou hast decreed.

Hapwood, Lord, thy whole bidding to me; faithfully I will keep it. Highlight me, to scan thy law closely, and keep true to it with all my heart. Eagerly I long to be guided in the way of thy obedience. Ever is let my choice be set on thy will, not on servient thoughts. Even have I come for vain phantoms; let me find life in following thy way. Establish now the truth of thy promise to me that serves and fears is thee. Ease me of the reproach my heart deems, thou, whose words are my guidance. Mark command of thine I embrace lovingly; do thou as in thy kindness grant me life.

For me too, Lord, thy mercy, for me too the deliverance thou hast promised! Fit answer for those who trust me, that I rely on thy truth.

- a Faithful thy promise, let me not hope of it in vain; in thy covenant live  
a my hope. For ever and for evermore true is thy charge that shall lead  
a me. Truly shall my feet tread, if thy will is all my quest. Fearfully  
will I tale of thy decrees in the presence of kings, and be never abashed.  
a Vain would I have all my study to the law I love. Fling aside my  
arms to grant thy law, ever in my thoughts thy bidding.
- a Go not back on the word thou hast pledged to thy servant, there  
a lies all my hope. Good were in my affliction, thy promises have brought  
a me life. Goodness down by the sides of my oppressors, cover from thy  
a law I reverse side. Gracious confusion, Lord, is the measure of thy  
a just dealings is times long past. Great hath been I to see wrong done,  
a and how they abandon thy law. Gone out into a land of exile, of thy  
a command I make my song. Glories of the night find me still thinking  
a of thy name, Lord, still observant of thy bidding. Gladness I ask no  
a other, but the following of thy will.
- a Harkye, Lord, I claim no other, but to obey thy word. Heart-deep  
a my expectation before thee for the service thou hast promised. Have  
a I not planned out my path, turned aside to follow thy decrees? Have  
a such as mine can boast no delay in obeying out all thy bidding. Blessed  
a is by the secret which silence told for me, never was I forgetful of  
a thy law. Harkye when I rise at dawn of night to praise thee for thy  
a just dealings. How well I love the words that flow from thee, and are true  
a to thy word! Show thy mercy like the earth, Lord! Teach me to do thy  
a will.
- a In fulfillment of thy promise, Lord, what kindness thou hast shown  
a thy servant! Ignites, instruct me still; all my hope is in thy covenant.  
a Lill I stray'd till thou didst chasten me; no more shall thy warnings  
a go unheeded. Hushed, hushed thou art gracious; teach me to do thy  
a bidding. In vain my oppressors plot against me, thy will is all my quest.  
a Inhuman hearts, covered with scorn! For me thy law is lawning enough.  
a It was in mercy thou didst chasten me, rebuking me to thy abundance.  
a It is not the law thou hast given down to me this rich store of gold  
a and silver!
- a Jealous for the handwork thou hast made, teach me to understand  
a thy commandment. Joy shall be thine, thy true worshippers, to see  
a with confidence I have in thy word. Just are thy awards, I know it  
a well, Lord, it was in righteousness thou didst afflict me. Judge me no  
a wrong; ply and comfort thy servant as thou hast promised. Judge  
a me in mine iniquities and life for one that loves thy will! Just be still  
a to all, who wrong me scornfully; thy law is all my study. Joined to my  
a company be every soul that worships thee and heeds thy warnings.  
a Jealously let my heart observe thy bidings; let me not hope in vain.

Keeping watch for thy aid, my soul languishes, yet I trust in thy word. Keeping watch for the fulfillment of thy promise, my eyes as languish for comfort still delayed. Keen throats pierced the wine-drink; as so near I, yet never forget thy will. Knowest thou not how short are as thy servant's days? Soon be my accents redeemed. Knowest still be as plotting against me still, that are no friends to thy law. Knowest they as are that wrong me; being still, as the covenant stands unchanging. Keep as thy bidding I would, though small hope of life they had left me. Kind as is thou ever wert, preserve me; then, near thy bidding, and I will obey.

Lord, the word thou hast spoken stands ever unchanged in heaven, as Loyal to his promise, age after age, is he who made the enduring earth. as Long as time lasts, the day keeps its appointed course, obeying thy decree, Master of all. Let I should sink in my affliction, thou hast as given thy covenant to be my comfort. Life-giving are thy commands, as never by me forgotten. Lead me thy aid, the thing I see, and thy as bidding is all my quest. Let slanders go about to destroy me, I wait as on thy will. Lead where I may, all good things come out; only thy law as is mine beyond measure.

My delight, Lord, is in thy bidding; over my thoughts return to it. as Moving still on thy commandments, I have grown more prudent than my as enemies. More wisdom have I than all my teachers, as well have I as pondered thy decrees. More learning have I than my elders, I that as hold true to thy charge. Mindful of thy warnings, I guide my steps as clear of every evil path. Mind under thy nation, thy will I keep ever as in view. Most sure appointing are thy promises, never was broken as so sweet to my taste. Made wise by thy law, I show every path of as evil-doing.

No lamp like thy word to guide my feet, to show light on my path, as Never will I retract my oath to give thy just commands observance. as Seeking, Lord, has affliction, never the wrong help thou dost promise as me? Nay, Lord, accept these vows of mine; much can as do thy bidding, as Needs must I stave my life in my hands, yet am I ever mindful of thy as law. Nearly the master of the wicked caught my feet, yet would I run as swift from my shackles. Now and ever thy covenant is my prize, as is my heart's comfort. Now and ever to do thy will, to save thy people, as is my heart's aim.

Out upon the men that play truant to the law I love! Other defenses, as other stronghold have I none; is thy law I trust. Out of my path, as lovers of wrong; I will keep my God's commandments. Only let thy as promised aid preserve me; do not disappoint me of the hope I cherish. Only do thou punish me in safety, looking ever to thy will. They as shall who will not, shall own thy discipline; life is all their wishing.

as Oracles they are that profess the land with wrong; for me, thy law  
is enough. Overcome my sinless being with the fear of thee; I am ashamed  
of thy judgments.

as Protect the justice of my cause; never leave me at the mercy of my  
oppressors. Pledge thyself till we behold thee; save me from the  
captivity of my enemies. Finding away, I look for thy saving help, the  
unfailing keeping of the promise. Pay thy own servants, and teach  
us him thy decree. Perfect in thy own servant's heart the knowledge  
of thy will. Put off the heat, Lord, no more; too long thy command-  
ments stand defiled. Precious beyond gold or jewel I hold thy law.  
as Pined be every decree of thine; fastened be every path of evil-doing.

as Right wonderful thy decrees are, and well my heart loves them.  
as Revelation and light thy words declare to the simple. Bless over  
me a sign from thy lips as I long after thy command. Rejoice and play  
to me, as thou hast play for all that love thy name. Break thou my path  
as thou hast promised; never be wrong-doing my master. Rescue me  
as thou hast's oppression, as thou hastest forth on thy bidding. Rescue to thy  
servant the souls of thy loving friends, and teach him to know thy  
re-will. Rivers of tears flow from my eyes, as see thy law impossible.

as No just, Lord, thou art, thy words so truly given. Satisfy justice  
as and strict faithfulness teaches all thy decrees. Strong by love's delivery,  
as I watch my enemies defy thy bidding. Shall not I, thy servant, love  
as thy promise, true and found true? Still, despised and dishonoured,  
as I do not forget thy charge. Stand thy faithfulness steadily, thy law  
as for ever champion. Sorrow and distress have fallen on me as the  
as consciousness is all my comfort. Sentence earned is thy decree;  
teach me the wisdom that brings life.

as Thy statutes, Lord, my whole heart claims, a heart true to thy  
command. To thee I cry, O grant deliverance; I will do all thy bidding.  
as Trusting comes, and I come to plead with thee, hoping ever in thy  
as promise. Through the night my eyes keep watch, as I ponder thy  
as sayings. Thine, Lord, as times in thy mercy, and great life according  
as to thy will. Treacherous lies draw near, that are stranger to thy  
as command. True, Lord, art thou at heart; all thy words are true.  
as Taught long since by thy decrees, I know well thou hast ordained them  
as everlastingly.

as Unblessed is my lot, look down and rescue me, that still am mindful  
as of thy law. Uphold my cause, and deliver me; true to thy promise,  
as grant me life. Unblessed thy mercy to the sinner that defies thy bidding.  
as Uncomforted, Lord, are thy blessings; as thy will be, grant me life.  
as Under all the weights of my oppressors, I keep true to thy charge.  
as Unhappy I, that watch thy warnings to the sinner go unheeded! Up.



Lord, and witness the love I bear thy covenant in thy mercy bid me live! Unchanging truth is thy word's fountain-head, eternal the force as of thy just decrees.

Tired by the cruellest malice of prison, my heart will dwell on thy doings. Thine rejoice not more over rich spoils, than I in thy promises. Willing I abate and renounce; thy law is all my life. Thine are thanks never cease a day I give thee for thy just rewards thou haston. Very great peace is thine who love thy law; their feet never stumble, so Willingly, Lord, I wait on thee for success, hoping ever true on thy designs. Transfixed by great love, my heart is ever obedient to thy will. Vigilantly I observe precept and bidding of thine, living always as is in thy sight.

Mild thou hast admit my cry, Lord, to thy presence, and grant me as thy promised gift of wisdom! Mild thou hast condescend my plea, as witness thy pledge to deliver me! What peace shall burst from my lips, when thou hastest knowest thy will! What hymns of thankfulness as this tongue shall raise to the author of all just decrees! Wonder thou as thou lift thy hand to aid me, that take my stand on thy covenant! Weary as it is, Lord, waiting for deliverance, but thy law is my comfort. What as will thy just reward great witness, that I may live to praise thee! Why as wast thou sent me, like a lost sheep, come to look for thy servant, that is mindful will of thy bidding.

## PSALM 118

(120)

(A song of ascents.)

**N**OT unheeded I cry to the Lord in the hour of my distress. Lord, have pity and deliver me from the treacherous lips, the perjured tongue. Forasmuch, he will give thee all thy dreams and more; sharp arrows from a warrior's bow, rods that spread desolation. Unhappy I, that am well doomed to exile; still dwell where Cedar dwells, my heart sick for home! Among the enemies of peace, the peace I cherish as word of mine but purchase their weapon attack.

## PSALM 120

(121)

(A song of ascents.)

**I** LIFT up my eyes to the hills, to find deliverance; from the Lord deliverance cometh to me, the Lord who made heaven and earth. Never will he who guards thee allow thy foot to stumble; never fail

asleep as his post. Such a guardian has David, one who is never weary,  
 never sleeps; it is the Lord that guards thee, the Lord that stands  
 at thy right hand to give thee shelter. The sun's rays by day, the moon's  
 by night, shall have no power to harm thee. The Lord guards thee  
 from all evil; the Lord protect thee in danger, the Lord protect thy  
 journeying and thy home-coming, henceforth and for ever.

## PSALM 121

(122)

(A song of ascents. Of David.)

**W**ELCOME sound, when I heard thee crying, We will go into  
 the Lord's house! Within thy courts, Jerusalem, our feet stand as  
 hazy. Jerusalem, built as a city should be built that is set in fellowship.  
 There the tribes meet, the Lord's own tribes, to give praise, as Israel is  
 ever bound, to the Lord's name. There the thrones are set for judg-  
 ment, thrones of authority over the house of David. Praise for all that  
 beings Jerusalem praise! May all who love thee dwell at ease! Let there  
 be peace within thy ramparts, ease in thy strongholds! For love of thy  
 brethren and thy kinsmen friends, peace is still my prayer for thee;  
 remembering the house of the Lord our God, I long for thy happiness.

## PSALM 122

(123)

(A song of ascents.)

**U**NTO thee I lift up my eyes, unto thee, who dwellest in the heavens.  
 See how the eyes of the servants are fixed on the Lord of hosts,  
 masters, the eyes of a child on the hand of her mistress! Our eyes,  
 too, are fixed on the Lord our God, waiting for your sign of his mercy.  
 Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy on us; we have had our fill of man's  
 disdain. Our hearts can bear no more to be the scorn of luxury, the  
 defiance of the proud.

## PSALM 123

(124)

(A song of ascents. Of David.)

**I**F the Lord had not been on our side, Israel may boast, if the Lord  
 had not been on our side when Babylon first assailed us, it seemed  
 as if they must have swallowed us up alive, so fierce their anger flamed

as. It seemed as if the tide must have rushed on down when we ven-  
 tured our lives on that flood: an encroaching tide, and our lives ventured  
 on it. Blessed be the Lord, who has not let us fall a prey to those  
 ravenous mounted. Safe, like a bird covered from the fowler's snare, the  
 snare is broken now, and we are safe. Such help is ours, the Lord's help,  
 that made heaven and earth.

## PSALM 124

(123)

(A song of ascents.)

**THOUGH** who trust in the Lord are strong as mountain Zion itself.  
 Unmoved for ever is he who dwells at Jerusalem; as the hills protect  
 it, so the Lord protects his people, now and for ever. Domain of the  
 Lord! No longer shall godless men bear rule in it; nor the just, no, might  
 set their hands with gale. Deal kindly, Lord, with the kindly, with the  
 true-hearted. But that story into the score the Lord will provide, as he  
 punishes wrong-doers; but upon Israel there shall be peace.

## PSALM 125

(124)

(A song of ascents.)

**WHEN** the Lord gave back Zion her banished ones, we were like  
 men refreshed;<sup>1</sup> in every mouth was laughter, joy was on every  
 tongue. Among the heathen themselves it was said, What favour the  
 Lord has shown them! Favour indeed the Lord has shown us, and  
 our hearts are rejoiced. Our withered hopes, Lord, like some desert  
 watercourse turned? The men who are sowing in tears will reap, one day,  
 with joy. Mournful enough they go, but with seed so sowing; trust we,  
 they will come back rejoicing, as they carry their sheaves with them.

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'the men who sow.'—

<sup>2</sup> Some commentators think that the process of deliverance was still incomplete, only a small number of exiles (for example) having returned from captivity; others, that verse 1 expresses, not something which had actually happened, but an imaginary picture.

## PSALM 116

(127)

(A song of ascents. Of Solomon.)

**V**AIN is the builder's toil, if the house is not of the Lord's building; vainly the guard keeps watch, if the city has not the Lord for its guardian. Vain, that you should be woe before daybreak, rest awhile before you are started, your pillow laid in so hardy ways is not sleep; his gift to the man he loves!<sup>1</sup> Fatherhood itself is the Lord's gift, the fruitful womb is a crown that comes from him. For the disinherited, children are like arrows in a warrior's hand.<sup>2</sup> Happy the man who has his heart's fill of cheer; his voice will not be set aside when he pleads against his enemies at the gate.

## PSALM 127

(128)

(A song of ascents.)

**B**LESSED are all those who fear the Lord, and follow his precept. "Thyself" shall not what thy hands have sown be sold to whom thou art; all good shall be thine. Thy wife shall be fruitful as the vine that grows on the walls of thy house, the children round thy table as sturdy as olive-branches.<sup>3</sup> Let a man serve the Lord, such is the blessing that awaits him. May the Lord who dwells in Zion bless them amongst those who Jerusalem in prosperity all thy life long. Mayest thou live to see thy children's children, and peace resting upon Israel.

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text is generally interpreted as meaning, "Vain that you should be before daybreak, and sit on low or high, when your bread is hard; he provides as well for us as our sheep;" or, at some would translate the latter part "he provides equally well for the man he loves while they lie asleep." The verse is not, in any case, an incentive to idleness; the gift of the pastor lies in what follows. What is the use of a house to a childless man, of a well-built city with a deserting number of inhabitants; what is the use of sowing day and night, unless you have a family to provide for?

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew may probably mean, "The children of a young man are like arrows in a warrior's hand," since they have grown to manhood before he is engaged with old age.

<sup>3</sup> "His heart's fill," in the Hebrew text, "his quiver full."

<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew may probably mean, "Thy wife shall dwell in the innermost part of thy house, like a fruitful vine."

## PSALM 118

(118)

(A song of ascents.)

**O**FTEN have they assailed me even from my youth (yet this be Israel's  
 boast), often have they assailed me even from my youth, but  
 never were entangled me. I bent my back, and sinners misdealt  
 me; long their tyranny lasted, but the Lord proved faithful, and broke the  
 sinners' snare in pieces. Let them be dismayed and routed, all these  
 enemies of Zion. Let them be like the stalks on a house-top, that wither  
 there unperceived; never will they be grasped in the reaper's hand,  
 or all the gleaner's heaves: no power by will say, The Lord's blessing  
 on you: we bless you in the name of the Lord!

## PSALM 119

(119)

(A song of ascents.)

**O**UT of the depths I cry to thee, O Lord; Answer, I hear to my  
 voice; let but thy ear be attentive to the voice that calls on thee  
 for pardon. If thou, Lord, take heed of our iniquities,<sup>1</sup> Answer, who  
 has strength to bear it? Ah, but with thee there is forgiveness; I will  
 wait for thee, Lord, as thou dost command. My soul relies on his promise,  
 my soul waits patiently for the Lord. From the morning watch till  
 night has fallen, let Israel trust in the Lord;<sup>2</sup> the Lord, with whom  
 there is mercy, with whom is abundant power to ransom. He it is that  
 will ransom Israel from all his iniquities.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ex. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Some versions would render "wait" or "have up," rather than "take heed of."

<sup>3</sup> See 4-6. The Hebrew text here is usually rendered, "Ah, but with thee there is forgiveness; therefore thou shalt be feared. I rely upon the Lord, my soul  
 relies upon him, in his promise I trust. My soul looks towards the Lord, never  
 again shall the evil-doers look for the morning."

## PSALM 131

(131)

(A song of ascents. Of David.)

**L**ORD, my heart is not lifted up, my eyes are not mixed from the earth;  
 my mind does not dwell on high things, on marvels that are  
 beyond my reach. Fear no witness that mine were humble thoughts,<sup>1</sup>  
 that my soul was never exalted with pride. The thoughts of a child  
 newly weaned towards its mother, this is all my soul knows of exalta-  
 tion. Let Israel trust in the Lord, henceforth and for ever.

## PSALM 131

(132)

(A song of ascents.)

**L**ORD, remember David, and all his patient endeavours, the oath  
 he swore to the Lord, the vow he made to the God of Jacob:  
 'Never will I come beneath the roof of my house, or climb up him-  
 self the bed that is strewn for me; never shall those eyes have sleep, those  
 eyelids close, this brow take any rest, until I find the Lord a home,  
 the God of Jacob a dwelling-place. And now, at Ephraim, we have  
 heard tidings of what we looked for: we have found it in the woodland  
 Ephraim;<sup>2</sup> we will make our way into his tabernacle, pay reverence in  
 the place where he halted on his journey. Up, Lord, and take pos-  
 session of thy resting-place, thou and the ark which is thy throne! Let

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'If I did not think humbly,' some such words as 'may the Lord punish me for it' being understood. This was a frequent form of self-casting among the Jews, cf. Ps. 54.18. But some scholars would translate humbly, and make the whole verse into one sentence. The second part of it has been very variously interpreted, 'incomprehensible' being sometimes understood as 'witness'. But it seems simpler to interpret the Latin as meaning that the Psalmist has no more thoughts of making a return to God for his favour, than a weaned child has of making return to its mother. The Hebrew verb is generally rendered, 'Like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child my soul is with me,' but here too the significance of the words is variously interpreted.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'Behold, we have heard of it at Ephraim, and found it in the place of the wood (or, of fruit).' If this psalm was composed for the dedication of Solomon's Temple (II Par. 8.41, 42) and commemorates the bringing back of the Ark to Jerusalem (I Par. 15), we should naturally suppose that 'it' means the Ark. It is not clear that the Ark ever rested at Bethel-hen-Ephraim: but some think that Ephraim here is another name for Silo (I Kg. 4.5), and that the other half of the verse refers to Gethshem, the 'oil of the wood' (I Par. 15.6).

thy prints go shall in the venture of innocence, thy faithful cry stood with rejoicing.

Think of thy servant David, and do not refuse audience to the king as thou hast rejected. Never will the Lord be false to that inevitable oath he swore to David: I will raise to thy throne babes of thy own body; if thy sons hold fast to my covenant, to the decree which I as maker know to them, their sons too shall reign on thy throne for ever. The Lord's choice has fallen upon Zion, this is the dwelling he longed for: Here, for ever, is my resting-place, here is my desired home. Trust me, I will give my blessing to the widow;<sup>1</sup> the poor shall have a bread in their hearts' content. I will clothe her prints in the venture of triumph, cries of rejoicing shall arise among her faithful people. There the stock of David shall bud, there the lamp burn which I have lit for my anointed.<sup>2</sup> I will cover his enemies with confusion; so his as hee my holy nation shall be bright.

## PSALM 131

(131)

(A song of ascents. Of David.)

GRACIOUS the sight, and full of comfort, when brethren dwell united. Gracious as hail poured on the head till it flows down, as in the bounden babe that flowed down Aaron's beard, and reached the very skirts of his robe. It is as if dew like the dew of Hermon were falling on this hill of Zion<sup>3</sup> here, where the Lord has promised to grant benediction and life everlastingly.

## PSALM 132

(132)

(A song of ascents.)

COME, then, praise the Lord, all you that are the Lord's servants; O you who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts where our God dwells. At midnight lift up your hands towards the sanctuary

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'There will I make widows perishing.'

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'There will I make a home grow for David, I have ordained a lamp for my anointed;' both metaphors for the continuance of his royal dynasty (228 Ex. 12. 4, 14. 1-16).

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'Like the dew of Hermon that falls on the hill of Zion,' which, however, was more than a hundred miles distant. It grows clear, therefore, that the dew of Hermon are only metaphorical here as typical of evergreen life heavy down, unless those waters are right who report that the reference is to a moist dew, differently spelt in Hebrew, which was part of the Hermon range (228 Ex. 12. 4, 14. 1-16).

and bless the Lord. May the Lord who dwells in Zion bless thee,  
the Lord who made heaven and earth!

## PSALM 134

(135)

(Altekin.)

**P**RAISE the Lord's name; praise the Lord, you that are his servants,  
you who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts whose  
our God dwells. Praise to the Lord, a Lord so gracious, praise to  
his name, a name so well-beloved. Was not the Lord made choice  
of Jacob, chosen Israel for his own?

Doubt it never, the Lord is great; he, our Master, is higher than  
all the gods. In heaven and on earth, in the sea and in the deep waters  
descends us, the Lord accomplishes his will, summoning clouds from  
the ends of the earth, rain-storms wedding to lightning-flashes, bringing  
winds out of his store-house. He is war that smote the first-born of  
the Egyptians, men and horses alike; what wonders and portents,  
Egypt, thou didst witness, what so plague Pharaoh and all his household!  
He it was that smote nations after nations, and slew the kings in their  
pride. Slew king of the Amorrites, and Og the king of Basan, and  
all the rulers of Canaan, and marked down their lands for a dwelling-  
place where his own people of Israel should dwell.

Lord, thy name abides for ever; age succeeds age, and thou art ever  
unforgotten. The Lord defends his people, takes pity on his servants.  
What are the idols of the heathen but silver and gold, gods which the  
hands of men have fashioned? They have mouths, and yet are silent;  
eyes they have, and yet see nothing; ears they have, and hear not  
a hearing, never a breath have they in their mouths. Such the end of all  
who make them, such the reward of all who trust them. Bless the  
Lord, name of Israel, bless the Lord, name of Aaron, bless the Lord,  
name of Levi, bless the Lord, all you that are the Lord's worshippers.  
Here, in Zion, his dwelling-place, here, in Jerusalem, let the Lord's name  
be blessed.

## PSALM 135

(136)

(Altekin.)

**G**IVE thanks to the Lord for his goodness, his mercy is eternal;  
give thanks to the God of gods, his mercy is eternal; give thanks  
to the Lord of lords, his mercy is eternal. Eternal his mercy, who does



great deeds as once she did; eternal his mercy, whose wisdom made the heavens; eternal his mercy, who poured earth upon the floods; eternal his mercy, who made the great luminaries; made the sun to rule by day, his mercy is eternal; made the moon and the stars to rule by night, his mercy is eternal.

Praised his mercy, who taught the Egyptians by smiting their first-born; eternal his mercy, who delivered Israel from their midst, with a conquering power, with his arm raised on high, his mercy is eternal. Knewed the mercy that divided the Red Sea in two, eternal the mercy that led Israel through its waters, eternal the mercy that drowned in the Red Sea Pharaoh and Pharaoh's men. And so he led his people through the wilderness, his mercy is eternal.

Eternal the mercy that smote great kings, eternal the mercy that slew the kings in their beds, Sennacherib king of the Assyrians, his mercy is eternal, and Og the king of Bashan, his mercy is eternal. Blessed the mercy that smothered down their land to be a dwelling-place; a dwelling-place for his servant Israel, his mercy is eternal. Eternal the mercy that remembers us in our afflictions, eternal the mercy that delivers us from our enemies, eternal the mercy that gives all living things their food. Give thanks to the God of heaven, his mercy is eternal, or give thanks to the Lord of Lords, his mercy is eternal.

## PSALM 138

(137)

(A psalm of David, of Jeremiah.)

**W**HEN set down by the streams of Babylon and wept there, remembering Zion. Willow-trees grow there, and on these we hang up our bags when the men who took us prisoners asked us for a song. We must make sport for our enemies. A song, there, from the music they sing at Sion! What should we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? Jerusalem, if I forget thee, perils the skill of my right hand! Let my tongue stick fast to the roof of my mouth if I cease to remember thee, if I find in night but Jerusalem the fortress-head of my crown! Remember, Lord, how the sons of Edom triumphed when Jerusalem fell; strip it, they said, strip it, till the very foundation is laid bare, Babylon, poor withered queen! Blessed be the man who deals out re-

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text of this verse probably means "When the men who took us prisoners asked us for a song of a song, those who told us were asked us for joyful music, sing us one of the melodies of Sion."

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text has "Let my right hand forget"; the Latin version, "Let my right hand be given over to forgetfulness."

<sup>3</sup> Literally, "Prophet (in the Hebrew text, denoted) daughter of Babylon."

• then the measure thou hast dealt in us! blessed be the man who will  
 catch up thy children, and dash them against the rock!

## PSALM 137

(136)

(For David himself.)

• **M**Y heart's thanks, Lord, for knowing in the prayer I uttered,  
 • angels for my witnesses,<sup>1</sup> I will sing of thy praise. I bow down  
 in worship towards thy sanctuary, giving thanks to thy name for thy  
 mercy and faithfulness; thou hast made thy name renowned above  
 • all things else.<sup>2</sup> O thou hast lived to me when I call upon thee, thou  
 • hast filled my heart with strength. All the kings of the earth will praise  
 • thee now; were not thy wonders made in their hearing? Let their  
 • song be of thy Lord's doings, how great is his renown, O Lord,  
 who is so high above us, yet looks upon lowly things, looks upon the  
 • poor, too, but from far off. Though affliction surrounded my path, thou  
 dost preserve me; it is thy power that confronts my enemies' malice,  
 • thy right hand that rescues me. My purposes the Lord will yet speed;  
 thy mercy, Lord, endure for ever, and wilt thou abandon us, the  
 creatures of thy own hands?

## PSALM 138

(137)

(To the end of David, a psalm.)

• **L**ORD, I lie open to thy scrutiny; thou knowest me, knowest when  
 • I sit down and when I rise up again,<sup>3</sup> thou hast read my thoughts  
 • from far away. Thou dost map out the path I take, the lot I inherit, thou  
 • knowest all my journeyings, and yet no word of mine spoken. And  
 • indeed, Lord, thou knowest all things, new and old; it is thou that  
 • hast fashioned me, thy hand that has been laid upon me. Such wisdom  
 as thine is far beyond my reach, no thought of mine can attain it.

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew word here translated 'angels' means literally 'paths.' Some think it refers, as in Ps. 91, to earthly rulers, cf. verse 4 below.

<sup>2</sup> The last sentence of this verse is probably coverage literally, 'thou hast exalted thy holy name above all things else'; the Hebrew text has, apparently, 'thou hast exalted the word above all thy name.'

<sup>3</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'Thou dost examine my journey and my resting.'

<sup>4</sup> as in 4. 5. The Hebrew text is probably to be interpreted, 'There is no word on my tongue which thou, Lord, dost not know. Thou dost hedge me in behind and before,' &c., but the sense of the last verb is uncertain.

Where can I go, then, to take refuge from thy spirit, to hide from thy view? If I should climb up to heaven, thou art there; if I sink down to the world beneath, thou art present still. If I should take flight at dawn of day, and come to rest at the furthest end of the sea, still would I find thee beckoning to me, thy right hand upholding me. Or perhaps I would think to bury myself in darkness, night should be the only witness of my piousness;<sup>1</sup> but no, darkness is no hiding-place from thee, with thee the night shines clear as the day itself; light and dark are one.

These are my inmost thoughts. Didst thou not form me in my mother's womb? I praise thee for thy wondrous majesty,<sup>2</sup> for the wonder of thy creation, which my own being most needs acknowledge. This mortal frame has no mysteries for thee, who didst conceive it in secret, all that I am was once hidden in the dark recesses of the earth. Thy eyes looked upon me, when I was yet unborn; all human life was already written in thy record, brought to birth through the long days when they had no being.<sup>3</sup>

Great wonders have I for thy friends, O God;<sup>4</sup> sovereign power is thine in abundance; they are unnumbered as the sand, past all my counting. I wake from sleep, and thou art still with me.<sup>5</sup> O God, wouldst thou but make an end of the wicked Murderers, keep your distance from me! You are ever whispering in your horns, 'They shall have no advantage from the altar thou givest them.'<sup>6</sup> Lord, do I not hate the men who hate thee, am I not sick at heart over their rebellion? See me passing hurried I hear thee, count them my sworn enemies. Scatter me, O God, as thou wilt, and read my heart; put me to the test, and watch the steps I take. See if on any false path my heart is set, and if myself lead me in ways unbecomingly.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'Might I should be all my illumination in my piousness.'

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'Because thou art wondrously exalted.' The Hebrew text has, 'because because wonders thou doest to my soul.'

<sup>3</sup> The verse here is very uncertain, but a comparison with the Syriac and Greek texts shows that the rendering here given is the sense intended by the Latin version.

<sup>4</sup> The word translated 'friends' in the Latin version is more accurately interpreted as meaning 'thoughts,' 'wise counsels,' as in verse 5 above.

<sup>5</sup> The second part of this verse is usually interpreted as meaning that the Psalmist felt into a trance while trying to reckon up the sum of God's wise counsels, and comes to himself feeling the sum still incalculable. But it may be questioned whether the sense is not more generally of Ps. 135 above.

<sup>6</sup> The meaning of the Latin seems to be, that the enemies of Israel are determined not to leave it in peaceful possession of the altar God has given it for an inheritance. The sense of the Hebrew text is doubtful, but it is generally interpreted as meaning that the wicked make mention of God Or, rebel against God, curfily, and take his name in vain.

PSALM 140

(140)

(To the end; a psalm of David.)

1 **R**ESCUE me, Lord, from human malice, save me from the hands  
 2 of oppressors, always plotting treachery in their hearts, always  
 3 at their quarrelling, tongues sharp as the tongue of serpents, lips that  
 4 hide the poison of adders. Preserve me, Lord, from the power of  
 5 sinful men, save me from those lovers of oppression who are plotting  
 6 to trip my feet. What hidden snares they set for me, those tyrants,  
 7 what nets they spread to catch me, what traps they lay in my path!  
 8 To the Lord I make my appeal, Thou art my God, listen to the  
 9 voice that pleads with thee. My Lord, my Master, my strong deliverer,  
 10 it is thou that shieldest my head in the day of battle. Do not betray  
 11 my hopes, Lord, into the hands of the wicked; do not trouble me, and  
 12 let the schemers triumph. This be the fruit of their conspiracy, that  
 13 all their busy whispering should recoil upon themselves.<sup>1</sup> Let burning  
 14 shafts fall upon them; down into the fire throw them with hail stones, as complete  
 15 as unquenchable. Gile weapons will not always have their way on earth,  
 16 iniquity will overcome the oppressors and destroy them. Can I  
 17 doubt that the Lord will rescue the helpless, will grant the poor redress?  
 18 Honest men will yet live to praise thy name, upright hearts enjoy  
 the smile of thy favour.

PSALM 140

(141)

(A psalm. Of David.)

1 **C**OME quickly, Lord, at my cry for succour; do not let my appeal  
 2 to thee go unheard. Welcome as incense-smoke let my prayer  
 3 rise up before thee; when I lift up my hands, be it as acceptable as the  
 4 evening sacrifice. Lord, set a guard on my mouth, a barrier in front  
 5 in my lips. Do not turn my heart towards thoughts of evil, to converse  
 6 sin with speech sinners; not mine to take part with wrong-doers; not  
 7 mine to mingle with the company they keep.<sup>2</sup> Rather in love let some

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'The head of their going down, the labour of their lips will cover them.' It seems that the Latin and Greek versions mean to give some such interpretation as that suggested above. The Hebrew text appears to mean 'As for the head of those who compass me about, the mischief of their own lips shall overwhelm them.'

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text is usually rendered 'Not mine to share in their sinful desires.'

just men chastise me, reprove me; never shall the dinner slack this hand with the oil of his flattery. My prayer is still unheeded while they have their will. . . .<sup>1</sup>

. . . Here are men who have seen their rulers swallowed up by a death, doomed to the precipice. Listen to me they<sup>2</sup> shall, while listen they may.<sup>3</sup> The house of our countrymen lie scattered at the foot of the slopes. — like the ruins of a building that has fallen to earth.

And yet, these eyes look to thee, my Lord, my Master; in thee I trust; let not my life be foolish. Preserve me from the ambush they have laid for me, from the snares of the wrongdoers. Into his net is the dinner shall fall, while I, all unprotected, go safe on my journey.<sup>4</sup>

## PSALM 142

(142)

(Of understanding; for David, when he was in the cave; a prayer.)

**L**OUDEST my cry to the Lord, the prayer I utter for the Lord's mercy, as I pour out my complaint before him, tell him of the affliction I endure. My heart is ready to faint within me, but there are wretches ever my path. They lie in ambush for me, there by the wayside; I look to the right of me, and find none to take my part;<sup>1</sup> all hope of escape is cut off from me, none is concerned for my safety. To thee, Lord, I cry, claiming thee for my only refuge, all that is left me in this world of living men. Listen, then, to my plea; thou seest

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, there is no reference to the 'fol of the dinner'; the Psalms says that he will not refuse correction from the upright, but will treat it as 'oil poured on the head.' Its title at the end of the verse, 'my prayer is unheeded for their wickedness,' apparently is reference to verse 4.

<sup>2</sup> It does not seem likely that the word 'they' in this verse refers to the singers but undoubtedly it is taken generally interpreted of the Jewish people generally. This verse, and the verse which follows, are obscure both in the Hebrew text and in the Latin rendering; the sense is probably that certain leading men were drawn down a precipice; but the words which follow are difficult to connect with the context.

<sup>3</sup> For 'how do the wretches in their?' the Hebrew text (as ordinarily translated) gives 'the deep' (i.e., my friends) are pleasant to them.' At the ending of the next verse the Hebrew text is usually translated 'as when a man plunges and drowns for death.'

<sup>4</sup> 'His net' according to some interpretations means 'their own net.' In the Hebrew text the word 'unprotected' in the second half of the verse should rather be rendered 'together' (in reference to the dinner) or 'at the same time' (in reference to the Psalms himself).

<sup>5</sup> The Hebrew text is understood by some as meaning 'Look to the right of me, and thou wilt find none to take my part.'

me all defencesless. Rescue me from persecutors who are too strong  
 1 for me; restore liberty to a captive soul. What thanks, then, will I give  
 to thy name! Too long have honest hearts waited to see thee grant  
 me redress.<sup>1</sup>

## PSALM 143

(143)

(A psalm. Of David, when his son Absalom was in pursuit of him.)

**L**ISTEN, Lord, to my prayer; give my plea a hearing, as thou art  
 1 Lover faithful; listen, thou who lovest the right. Do not call thy  
 servant to account; what man is there living, that can stand guiltless  
 2 in thy presence? See how my enemies plot against my life, how they  
 have thrust me in the dust, set me down in dark places, like the long-  
 3 forgotten dead! My spirit is crushed within me, my heart is cowed.  
 4 And my mind goes back to past days; I think of all these days gone,  
 5 I dwell on the proofs thou givest of thy power. To thee I spread out  
 my hands in prayer, for thou my soul dost strive, like a hand parched with  
 droughts.

6 Haste, Lord, to answer my prayer; my spirit grows faint. Do not  
 turn thy face away from me, and leave me like one sunk in the abyss.  
 7 Speedily let me win thy mercy, my hope is in thee; to thee I lift up  
 8 my heart, show me the path I must follow; to thee I fly for refuge,  
 9 deliver me, Lord, from my enemies. Thou art my God, teach me to  
 do thy will; let thy gracious spirit lead me on, till I find sure ground  
 10 under my feet. For the honour of thy own name, Lord, thou wilt grant  
 11 me life; in my sore need, thy mercy will bring deliverance. Thou wilt  
 have pity, and rest my enemies; thy servant I; make an end of my cruel  
 persecutors.

## PSALM 143

(144)

(A psalm of David against Goliath.)

**B**LESSED be the Lord, my God, who makes these hands strong  
 1 for battle, whose fingers skilled in fight, the Lord whose praise we  
 and grants me safety, who delivers me and sets me at liberty, who  
 protects me and gives me confidence, bowing down nations to my  
 2 will. Lord, what is Adam's race, that thou givest heed to it; what

<sup>1</sup> In the second part of this sentence, the Hebrew text has, "Thou art faithful, will surely reward me for, perhaps, will be crowned with joy when thou rewardest me with thy favours."

is man, that thou createst for him. Like a breath he comes and goes,  
like a shadow his days pass.

Did I know sleep, Lord, and come down to earth, at thy touch, the  
mountains will be crushed in smoke. Tremble the highlands, so  
over my enemies; shoot the arrows, and throw them into confusion.  
With heavenly aid, from powder fired deliver me; save me, rescue me  
from the power of alien foes, who make treacherous promises, and lift  
their hands to perjury. Then, O my God, I will sing thee a new song, as a  
ten-stringed harp I will sound thy praise: the God to whom kings must  
look for victory, the God who has brought his servant David rescue.  
Save me from the cruel sword, deliver me from the power of alien  
foes, who make treacherous promises, and lift their right hands to  
perjury.

Happy is their lot, whose sons grow to manhood, tall as the saplings, in  
their daughters far of them, gaily decked to match the temple host;  
the luxury, their gardens full or burning on this side and that, their  
sheep bearing fruitfully, thronging the pasture-land, sturdy their  
cattle, no ruined walls, no felled trees, no lamenting in their streets. Happy  
is men call such a people as this; and is not the people happy, that has  
the Lord for its God?

## PSALM 144

(145)

(Praise of David's son.)

AND shall I not extol thee, my God, my king: shall not I  
thy name for ever and for evermore. Blessing shall be thine, thy  
after day; for ever and for evermore praised be thy name. Can any  
praise be worthy of the Lord's majesty, any thought set limits to his  
gracious? Down the ages the story of thy deeds is told, thy power  
is ever acclaimed; each magnifies thy unapproachable glory, declare  
thy wonders. Fabled are the tales they tell of thy power, pre-  
claiming thy magnificence; grateful their memory of all thy goodness,  
as they boast of thy just dealings. How gracious the Lord is, how  
merciful, how patient, how rich in pity! Is he not a loving Lord

<sup>1</sup> *ms. 14401.* The Greek and Latin versions seem to suggest that the prosperity here described is experienced by the Psalmist's enemies, mentioned in verse 21. In that case, the latter half of verse 25 must be understood as instituting a contrast between temporal and spiritual well-being. The Hebrew text, however, has 'our' instead of 'their' throughout this passage, and is generally understood as a prayer for the happiness of God's own people. The meaning of verse 25 in the Hebrew text is accordingly to verse 24 in the 'with every kind of praise,' instead of 'on this side and on that.'

to his whole creation; does not his mercy reach out to all that he has made?

10 Joining, then, Lord, in thy whole creation's praise, let thy faithful  
 11 servants bless thee; let them publish the glory of thy kingdom, and  
 12 discourse of thy power, making that power known to the rest of men,  
 13 the glory, the splendour of thy kingdom! No age shall dawn but shall  
 see thee reigning still generation past, and thy rule shall endure. O  
 how true the Lord is to all his promises, how high above us in all his  
 14 dealings!<sup>a</sup> Prostrate though men may fall, the Lord will lift them up,  
 will revive their crushed spirits.

15 Quietly, Lord, thy creatures raise their eyes to thee, and thou grantest  
 16 them, in due time, their nourishment, ready to open thy hand, and  
 17 fill with thy blessing all that live. So faithful the Lord is in all he  
 18 does, so high above us in all his dealings. The Lord draws near to every  
 man that calls upon him, will be but call upon him with a true heart.  
 19 Utter but the wish, you that fear the Lord, and he will grant it; will  
 20 hear the cry and bring aid. Vigilantly the Lord watches over all that  
 21 love him, crushes down the wicked for destruction. While these lips tell of  
 the Lord's praise, let all that lives bless his holy name, for ever, and for  
 evermore.

## PSALM 143

(146)

(Aldrich. Cf. Agassiz and Zachary.)

1 PRAISE the Lord, my soul; while life lasts, I will praise the Lord;  
 2 of him, my God, shall my songs be while I am here to sing them.  
 3 Do not put your trust in princes: they are but men, they have no  
 4 power to save. As soon as the breach leaves his body, man goes back  
 to the dust he belongs to; with that, all their designs will come to  
 5 nothing. Whither the man who turns to the God of Jacob for help,  
 6 puts his confidence but in the Lord his God, maker of heaven and  
 7 earth and sea and all they contain; the God who keeps faith for ever,  
 8 who redeems wrong, and gives food to the hungry. The Lord, who  
 brings release to the prisoner, the Lord, who gives sight to the blind,  
 9 the Lord, who raises up the fallen, the Lord who befrieth the innocent.  
 10 The Lord, who protects the stranger, who defends orphan and widow,  
 11 who overrules the counsel of the wicked. The Lord, reigning for ever,  
 thy God, Zion, reigning from age to age!<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The second half of this verse is wanting in the Hebrew text.

<sup>b</sup> The Hebrew text prints here the Aldrich which, in the Great and Latin versions, begins the following psalm.



## PSALM 145

(145:1-11)

(Aleinu.)

**P**RAISE the Lord, a gracious thing is praising cheerfully and worthily  
 let us give our God, praise. The Lord is rebuilding Jerusalem,  
 calling the huddled ones of Israel home; he is it that binds the broken  
 heart, and binds up its wounds. Does he not know the number of the  
 stars, and call each by its name? How great a Lord is ours, how mag-  
 nificent his strength, how immeasurable his wisdom! The Lord is the  
 defender of the oppressed, and lays the wicked low in the dust. Stir  
 up, then, in thanksgiving to the Lord, with the harp's music praise  
 our God; the God who curdles heaven with clouds, and lays up a  
 store of rain for the earth, who clothes the mountainsides with grass,  
 who e'en for man's need,<sup>1</sup> gives food to the cattle, food to the young  
 ravens that cry out to him. Not the well-mounted warrior is his choice,  
 nor the swift runner wins his favour; the Lord's favour is for those  
 who fear him, and put their trust in his Divine mercy.

## PSALM 147

(147:12-20)

(Aleinu.)

**P**RAISE the Lord, Jerusalem! Glorify God! He is it that  
 breaks the gates of brass, and makes the children, who dwell safe  
 in them; that makes the land a land of peace, and gives the full ear  
 of wheat to sustain them. See how he sends his command to the earth,  
 how swift his word runs! Now he spreads a pall of snow, covers the  
 earth with an icy veil of mist;<sup>2</sup> melts out the scorched crust of ice,  
 sends the frost there is no enduring. Then, at his word, all melts away;  
 a hoar-frost from him, and the waters flow! This is the God who makes  
 his word known to Jacob, gives Israel ruling and decree. Not such his  
 dealings with any other nation; nowhere else the revelation of his  
 will. Aleinu.

<sup>1</sup> The last five words of this verse are wanting in the Hebrew text.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Hebrew text, it is not the dark mist that are compared with snow, but the hoar-frost lying white on the ground.

PSALM 148

(Alleluia.)

**G**IVE praise to the Lord in heaven; praise him, all that dwell  
 1 so high. Praise him, all you angels of his, praise him, all his  
 2 armies. Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, every star that shines.  
 3 Praise him, you highest heavens, you waters beyond the heavens.  
 4 Let all those praise the Lord; it was his decree that fashioned them.  
 5 His command that gave them birth. He has set them there imaging  
 6 his ever, given them a law which cannot be altered.  
 7 Give praise to the Lord on earth, monsters of the sea and all its  
 8 depths; fire and hail, snow and ice,<sup>1</sup> and the storm-wind that executes  
 9 his decree; all you mountains and hills, all you fresh-trees and cedars,  
 10 all you wild beasts and crabs, creeping things and birds that fly in  
 11 air; all you kings and peoples of the world, all you that are princes  
 12 and judges on earth; young men and maids, old men and boys together;  
 13 let them all give praise to the Lord's name. His name is exalted in  
 14 an altar, his praise reaches beyond heaven and earth; and now he  
 15 has given flesh strength to his people. Shall not his faithful servants  
 16 praise him, the sons of Israel, the people that draw near to him?

PSALM 149

(Alleluia.)

**S**ING the Lord a new song here, where the faithful gather, let his  
 1 Spirit be heard. In him, the ruler of Israel, let Israel triumph;  
 2 let him, the ruler of Zion, let Zion's children keep holidays. Let there  
 3 be dancing in houses of his name, music of tambour and of harp,  
 4 to praise him. Still the Lord shows favour to his people, still he releases  
 5 the oppressed, and grants them victory. In triumph let thy faithful  
 6 servants rejoice, rejoice and take their ease. Ever on their lips they  
 7 bear the high praise of God, ever in their hands they carry two-edged  
 8 swords, ready to take vengeance upon the heathen, to curb the nations,  
 9 to chain the kings and bind princes in fetters of iron. Long since their  
 10 days is written; boast it in of his own servants that dance to exultate.  
 Alleluia.

<sup>1</sup> The last six words of this verse are wanting in the Hebrew text.

<sup>2</sup> For 'let' the Hebrew text has 'exult'.

## PSALM 130

(Alefalel.)

**P**RAISE God in his sanctuary, praise him on his sovereign throne.  
Praise him for his mighty acts, praise him for his surprising greatness.  
Praise him with the bang of the trumpet, praise him with harp and string.  
Praise him with the tambour and the dance, praise him with the music of string and of reed.  
Praise him with the clang of the cymbals, the cymbals that ring merrily. All creatures that breath have,  
praise the Lord. Alefalel.

## THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

### CHAPTER I

THESE proverbs were written by David's son Solomon, that was king of Israel, for the better understanding of man's wisdom, and self-command. Here is made known the secret of discernment; here men may learn the lesson of insight, the discern of they and right and honour. Here simplicity is put on its guard; here youth may find instruction and advice both together. The wise, too, may be the wiser for hearing them; they will aid even the discerning to guide his course aright; he will read both parables and the interpretation of parables, both wise words and the hidden thoughts they signify.

True wisdom is founded on the fear of the Lord; who but a fool would despise such wisdom, and the lessons the teachers?

Heed well, my son, thy father's warnings, nor make light of thy mother's teachings; no richer inheritance, crown or sceptre, can be thine. Turn a deaf ear, my son, to the blandishments of evil-doers that would make thee of their company. There are lions to be had for the instructing, the lives of unrepenting folk whose uprightness shall bite and them; there are fortunes to be swallowed up whole, as a man is swallowed up by death when he goes to his grave. No lack of treasure have, they say, rich plunder that shall find its way into thy house; thou hast but to throw in thy lot with us, every man a share alike. Such cranks, my son, are not fit thee, never sit a foot in their company; thou knowest well how eager they are for mischief, how greedy for blood, and the mare is led to no purpose if the bird is watching. What do they, but compass their own ruin, plot against their own lives? Such is ever the end of greed; he who cherishes it must fill by it a hole.

And all the while Wisdom is publishing her message, crying it aloud in the open square; never a meeting of roads, never a gateway, but her voice is raised, echoing above the din of it. What, says she, are you still gaping there, simpletons? Do the reckless still court their own ruin? Such fools, will you never learn? Pay heed, then, to my precept; listen while I speak out my mind to you, give you open warning.

Since my call is outward, since my hand beckons in vain, since my ear is deafened and all my request goes for nothing, it will be wiser to laugh, to mock at your disobedience, when perils close about you. Close about you they will, afflictions and sore distress, disasters that sweep down suddenly, gathering masses of ruin.

It will be their ruin, then, to call aloud; my ruin, then, to refuse as an answer. They will be only stupid looking for me, but find me never; fools, that grow weary of instruction, and would not fear the Lord. Well for them, if they had followed my counsel, if they had not spurned all the warnings I gave! Now they must eat of the harvest of their own wickedness (as reaped, make the harvest of the wheat their own harvest) as harvesters have brought them. Ah, silly souls, what a perilous a refusal, what fatal foolishness was here!

But let a man give heed to me, peace undisturbed shall be his, happiness shall be his, free from all threat of danger.

## CHAPTER 2

HERE, then, my son, is counsel for thee, take this holding of mine to heart; ever be thy ear attentive to wisdom, thy mind eager to attain discernment. Wisdom if thou wilt call to thy side, and make discernment most welcome, as thou wouldst find hidden riches, or bring hidden treasure to light, then thou wilt learn what it is to fear God, make trial of what it is to know God. Wisdom is the Lord's gift; only by his word spoken comes true knowledge, true discernment. So it is that he watches over the lives of the upright, bids the innocent walk unharmed; safe and sound the chosen friends of God come and go. Duty and right and honour thou shalt discern, and see ever where the best course lies, if no voice within finds a lodgement in thy heart, if knowledge once casts her spell upon thee. Truth and word right counsel shall keep over thee; it shall save thee from the wrong choice, save thee from the false counsel. False counsellors there are, that leave the high road to walk by dark alleys; for sin and shame is all their love and liking. All guides to a wrong path are all of them! And from her, too, right counsel shall protect thee, the woman that is no daughter of Israel, with her enticing foreign ways, that has forsaken the love of her youth, forgotten the work once pledged to her God. The house she dwells in is death's antechamber, the road by which she beckons leads to the grave; over man were it those that come back and set his face towards life.<sup>1</sup>

Thus to choose a wiser course, keeping ever the path of duty; as the upright, the innocent, shall have lands of their own and long enjoy as them; the godless, the wrong-doer will be lost for ever to the sorrow he day know.

<sup>1</sup> *See* 26-29. Some take this as a moral allusion to the habits of light women, as in ch. 7 below; but it is more probably an allegorical allusion to apostasy from the Jewish religion.

CHAPTER 3

**F**ORGET not thou, my son, the teaching I give thee; lest thou  
 1 words of mine close in thy house; long years they shall bring  
 2 thee of life well spent, and therewith prosperity. Two things must  
 3 never leave thee, kindness and loyalty, be these the rails that hang  
 4 about thy neck, grace be this inscription with thy heart for tables;  
 5 so both to God and man thou shalt be friend and confidant. Put all  
 6 thy heart's confidence in the Lord, as thy own skill relying never;  
 7 with thou but keep him in thy thoughts whitherso thou goest, he will  
 8 show thee the straight path. Do not give thyself airs of wisdom; enough  
 9 that thou shouldst fear God and shun ill-doing; here is health for the  
 10 midmost of thy being, here is sap for the marrow of thy bones. Pay  
 11 the Lord his due with what goods thou hast, letting him share the  
 12 first-fruits of every crop; so shall plenty fill thy barn, so shall thy wine-  
 13 press overflow at the vintage.

14 My son, do not underestimate the correction the Lord sends thee,  
 15 as do not be unmanned when he reproves thy faults. It is where he loves  
 16 that he hurrows correction, like a father whose son is dear to him.

17 Happy the man whose treasure-trove is wisdom, who is rich in  
 18 discernment; silver and finest gold are less profitable in the handling.  
 19 More rare is it than all things else; no price thou canst set that can  
 20 match it. Long life wisdom holds out to thee in her hand, riches and  
 21 glory in the other; where she guides, journeying is pleasant, where  
 22 is she points the way, all is peace. Take hold of her, clasp her to thee,  
 23 and the Tree of Life itself could not make thee more blessed. Not

without thee, wisdom and discernment, the Lord bored earth, the Lord  
 24 framed heaven; not without skill of his did the waters well up from  
 25 beneath us, or the dove fall in mist. My son, never lose sight of what  
 26 I am telling thee, cling to the wholesome dictates of prudence, that will  
 27 quicken life within thee, sparkle like jewels on thy brow. Seriously thou  
 28 shalt walk, with no fear of stumbling, steadfastly thou shalt lie down to  
 29 rest, and enjoy untroubled sleep; let no sudden alarm affright thee,  
 30 though gadflies menace thou dost hard; the Lord will be at thy side, and  
 31 keep thy fire clear of the snare they lay for thee.

32 Suffer him to do kindness who may, and thou thyself; when thou  
 33 sayest, do kindness; never bid a friend come back to-morrow for  
 34 the gift that might be made to-day. Never plot him against the friend  
 35 who suspects no harm of thee, or pick a quarrel with one who has

\* The meaning of the Hebrew text is doubtful.

done thee no injury. Do not envy the prosperity of the wrong-doer, as  
and be led away by his example; leave the Lord alone, and keep it  
for longer even his familiar friendship. Still on the horns of the wicked is  
the Lord's ban thine, his blessing where uprightness dwells; he laughs at  
at the mocker, grants his favour to the humble, and the wise shall as  
wise counsel; only to their shame art fools misled.

## CHAPTER 4

SOME of mine, take a lesson from your father; a lesson that will  
Secure discerning eyes of you, will you but heed it. A precious  
treasure it is, the tradition I teach, not to be lightly bartered away.  
Time was when I had a father of my own; and when I was but a  
boy, my mother's darling. In such words as these he would teach me;  
Ever be thy heart true to my bidding; if thine thou wouldst, hold fast  
the charge I give thee. Wisdom be thy quest, thy quest discernment  
will; thy father's age and faithful pupil, keep her at thy side, thy  
guardian; cherish her, thy preserve. Wisdom be thy chief thought,  
make discernment thine at all hazards; her attainment enable, her con-  
fidence enable thee; a wreath of fresh graces she will give thee, a crown  
of glory, to overshadow thy brow.

Listen, then, my son, and master the charge I give thee, as thou  
wouldest have long life. Here lies the road to wisdom, here is the path  
that will bring thee straight to thy goal; here thou mayst walk un-  
hampered, run without fear of stumbling. Hold fast by the instruction  
thou hast received, and never let it go; guard it as thou wouldest guard  
thy life. For golden ways and the example of sinful men have thou  
neither love nor liking; when their hearts and runs thy back upon  
them. Nor stay never without some ill deed done; some traveller's  
foot must stumble, as they lie sleepless on their beds; godlessness is the  
very bread they eat, they crave for wrong-doing as for wine. For how the  
path of the just grows ever brighter, like the light of dawn opening out  
into full day! But these, the sinners, are fain to walk on in darkness, un-  
aided by every fall.

Heed then and heed, my son, these words of warning; never lose  
sight of them, cherish them in thy inner heart; let a man master  
them, they will bring life and healing to his whole being. Use all thy  
watchfulness to keep thy heart true; that is the fountain whence life  
springs. Far, very far from thy tongue be the cheating word, from thy  
lips the whisper of calumny; let thy eyes see straight, thy gaze ever scan

is the path that lies before thee. Consider<sup>1</sup> that path well, and on it's  
 as proved thou shalt journey still; steering neither to right nor left, but  
 keeping thy steps ever clear of wrong-doing. (To the right lie such ways  
 as win the Lord's favour, to the left such as miss the goal. He it is that will  
 guide thy course aright, and set thy journey forward in peace).<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER 3

MY son, here is good advice for thy heading; listen to wise counsel,  
 if thou wouldst be discomfited, if thou wouldst have awe on  
 thy lips the cunning of pedence. First, give no credence to the wiles  
 of women; honey-sweet words the temptress<sup>3</sup> may use, all her talk be  
 soothing to eil, but ah, the drops of that cup are bitter; a two-edged  
 sword begets no sharper pang. Death's road she follows, her feet set  
 towards the grave; far from the highway that leads to life is the mare  
 she treads. Heed, then, my warning, and depart from her never; shun  
 her company, do not go near her doors. Wouldst thou squander the  
 pride of thy manhood upon heedless strangers like these?  
 If thou dost wilt spend all thy hopes, bestow all thy pains, upon  
 an alien home that is no home of thine, a time will come at last when  
 health and strength shall be wasted away. Then thou wilt complain  
 bitterly. Alas, why did I spurn every precept, reject every warning,  
 unheeded, unheeded, every lesson I was taught? No marvel, had I paid  
 the last penny, with the assembled people for my judge!<sup>4</sup>  
 Nay, drink, and drink deep, at thy own well, thy own cresset; thence  
 let thy offspring abound, like waters from thy own fountain flowing  
 through the public streets;<sup>5</sup> only let them be thy own, let there be no  
 commerce between thyself and strangers. A blessing on that fountain  
 of thine take thy pleasure with the bride thy manhood wins for thee.

<sup>1</sup> Literally 'direct' in the Latin version, 'weigh' in the Hebrew text. The Hebrew verb is colloquially interpreted 'smooth out' but it is difficult to see the advantage of such a metaphor here.

<sup>2</sup> The words enclosed in brackets are found in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text. They have perhaps been introduced by accident, evidently they do not suit the thought of the present passage.

<sup>3</sup> Literally 'harlot,' but it would appear from what follows, especially verse 14, that the warning here given is one against seducery, not fornication. It is uncertain, both here and elsewhere in the book, how much the Hebrew term 'harlot woman' is meant to convey the sense of foreign birth.

<sup>4</sup> See, for ex. gr. Ps. 82.

<sup>5</sup> Literally, 'Let thy fountain be carried out to channels abroad, distribute thy well-water through the streets'; but the phrase evidently refers to a numerous family born in lawful wedlock.



Thy own bride, gentle as a bird, graceful as a doe; be it her lesson that it sends away thy senses with the delight of a lover that loves still. What, as thy son, wouldst thou yield to the will of a stranger, daily with her substance that is none of thine? The Lord is watching, and knows what a man's crown is, let him betake himself where he will. The sinner will be measured by his own guilt, caught in the snare of his own wrongdoing; doomed by his own incontinence, by his own great folly betrayed.

## CHAPTER 4

**M**Y son, has some friend persuaded thee to be his enemy? Hast thou pledged thyself for a bond which is none of thine? Behold me, that a word of ascent has caught thee in a snare, thou art the prisoner of thy own promise made. Do then, my son, as I bid thee, obtain thy freedom; it is all done to fall into another man's power. Quick, no time to lose; wake up this neighbour of thine from his bed, see thou thyself close an eye-lid as he sleeps; fear from captivity nor bird from fowler's hand as swift as a escape!

Up with thee, sluggard, go to school with the ant, and learn the lesson of her swiftness. Chief as ruler she has none to give her commands; yet in summer hours, when the harvest is a-gathering, she ever lays up food for her own mouth-meat. And thou, sluggard, art still a-bed, with thee a never-wake? What, thou wouldst sleep a little longer, yawn a little longer; as a little longer thou must pillow head on hand? Alas, but poverty will not wait, the day of distress will not wait, like an armed vagabond it will fall upon thee! (Wouldst thou see the good grain flow like water, wouldst thou see poverty take wing, thou must be up and doing!)

Whitherso men thou be, sinners there be, that go ever with a cunning smile on their lips; a wink here, there a pressure of the foot, there a beckoning finger; all the while their wicked hearts are plotting mischief, as are weaving the causes of strife. Such men will be overtaken by their doom ere long, crushed all of a sudden beyond hope of remedy.

Six things I will tell thee, and cause a seventh for good measure, the Lord hates and will never abide; the haughty look, the lying tongue, the hands that take innocent life, the heart that ever devises thoughts of mischief, the foot that leaves open an ill counsel, the false witness whose every breath is perjury, and the sower of strife among brethren.

<sup>1</sup> The words enclosed in brackets appear in the Syriac and Greek, but not in the Hebrew text.

11 Keep true, my son, to the charge thy father gives thee, nor make  
 12 a light of thy mother's teaching: wear them ever close to thy heart,  
 13 as hang them like a locket upon thy bosom; be these, when thou waldest  
 14 abroad, thy company, when thou liest asleep, thy safeguard, in walking  
 15 a-hour, thy counsellor. This charge is a lamp to guide thee, that  
 16 teaching a light to lighten thee; the warnings correction giveth thee as a  
 17 road leading to life.

18 Here is protection for thee against the temptations that would lure  
 19 a thee away with her seductions. Never let her beauty win thy heart,  
 20 nor ever let her bold glance deceive thee. A harlot's pay is but the price  
 21 of a man; the adulteress costs dearest, her price is a man's whole life.

22 Who can carry fire in his bosom, without singeing the clothes he wears,  
 23 or walk on hot coals without burning his feet? No more can a man  
 24 commit with his neighbour's wife, and not be defiled by her reach. Small  
 25 a blame to the thief, when he steals to fill his hungry belly, and if he  
 26 is caught, why, he can pay himself, or yield up all that he has; the  
 27 adulterer, in the hunger of his heart, must risk losing life itself. Soothe  
 28 a wand soon he wins for himself, and shame there is no blotting out: so  
 29 misery for him, when the day of reckoning comes, from the anger of a  
 30 jealous husband that will know no man's excuses, will refuse reason  
 31 cover so abundant.

## CHAPTER 1

1 MY son, do not forget these warnings; let this charge of mine be as  
 2 a talisman, kept jealously, as thou lovest thy own life; precious as  
 3 a thou as the apple of thy eye be the teaching I give thee. Bind it fast about  
 4 thy finger, write it, as upon a tablet, on thy heart; give to wisdom a  
 5 sister's welcome, and hail divorcement to thy friend.

6 So wilt thou learn to shun the temptress with her bewitched words,  
 7 a the wife that is no wife at all. Ere now, looking down from my  
 8 a window through the lattice, I have watched the thoughtless crowd,  
 9 a and seen some gallant, more insouciant than the rest, crossing the street  
 10 a at the corner where such a woman dwells. Now his steps are taking  
 11 a him near that shade of harm; the day wanes, and the light fades; night  
 12 a spreads her pall of darkness. Who comes to meet him? A woman in rags  
 13 a harlot's guise, that goes out, ready of speech, to hunt men's lives. No  
 14 a rest for her, stay at home she cannot; ever in street and market-place  
 15 a she lies in ambush, at some corner of the ways. She draws him to herself  
 16 a and kisses him, flustering him with her bold speech: Only to-day I have  
 17 a paid a vow that I owed for my preservation, and here are my victims

freely killed; so I came out to find thee, longing for the sight of thee, and here thou art! Soft, soft I have made my bed, spread it with one of bordered napkins of Egyptian wool; freshly scented is that tower of mine with myrrh, and clove, and cinnamon. Come, let us just ourselves sit in dalliance, all the night through let us enjoy the long desired embrace. My hands stand motionless, my husband far away, and his pains with him; no fear of his returning till the moon is full.

Alas, the ready speech that beguiles him, the seducing lips that lead him captive away! He follows without more ado, unwitting as the ox is that goes to the slaughter, or a drinking lumb<sup>1</sup> nor knows what strokes await him, till the shaft is already deep in his bosom. So joyfully flies he blind like mine, heedless of his life's peril. Fixed ere well, my son; let not a tale warning be given in vain: do not let her rood thy heart away, do not be misled by her beseeching. Along the wounds such a woman has dealt as a heavy stone as the base of man murdered; truly her house is the grave's or tomb-chamber, opens the door into the secret closet of death.

## CHAPTER 8

AND, all the while, the wisdom that grows disengaged is crying: A foolard, is never silent; there he stands, on some high vantage-point by the public way, where he meets men, or at the city's approach, or close beside the gate, making proclamation. To every man, high and low, her voice calls: There is better counsel for the simpler; O foolish heart, take warning! Listen to me, I have matters of high moment to unfold, a plain message to deliver. A tongue that speaks truth, lips that seem inquiry: here all is sound doctrine, no shills, no evasive hints. No discerning heart, no well-tuned mind, but will see it right and just. Here is counsel, here is instruction, better worth the winning than silver or the finest gold; wisdom is more to be coveted than any jewel; there is no treasure that can be matched with hers.

What art thou, the wisdom that speaks to you? To shrewdness I am as a near neighbour, and I occupy myself with deep designs; but, should they ever have told that Saw the Lord, all pride and boundlessness, every catchword design and every treacherous word I shun. Good is counsel is mine, and honourable dwelling, self-command and high courage are my gifts; through me things learn how to ridge, how-grown is how to lay down just decorum; through me children and magistrates can carry their power aright. Love me, and thou shalt save my love; or wait ready at my door, and thou shalt gain woe to me. The gift is

<sup>1</sup> The sense of the Hebrew text here is uncertain.

I bring with me are riches and honour, princely state and the throne  
 of heaven. Mine is a yield better than gold or jewels, mine are treasures  
 more precious than the finest silver. A faithful crown I wear, nor  
 is moved the base of my constitution, falling never to catch the wealth  
 that love can with abundance give.

12 The Lord made me his? when first he went about his work, at the birth  
 of time, before his creation began. Long, long ago, before earth was  
 fashioned, I held my course. Already I lay in the womb, when the  
 depths were not yet in being, when no springs of water had yet broken  
 13 when I was born, the mountains had not yet sunk on their firm founda-  
 tions, and there were no hills; nor yet had he made the earth, or the  
 14 silver, or the solid framework of the world.<sup>1</sup> I was there when he  
 built the heavens, when he framed in the waters with a vault invisible  
 15 when he fixed the sky onstead, and levelled the fountain-springs of  
 16 the deep. I was there when he enclosed the sea within its bounds,  
 forbidding the waters to transgress their assigned limits, when he poised  
 17 the foundations of the world. I was at his side, a master-workman,  
 my delight increasing with each day, so I made play before him all the  
 18 while: made play in this world of dust, with the sons of Adam for  
 my play-fellows. Listen to me, then, you that are my sons, that follow,  
 19 so your happiness, in the path I show you; listen to the teaching  
 20 that will make you wise, instead of turning away from it. Blessed  
 are they who listen to me, keep vigil, day by day, at my threshold, watch-  
 21 ing till I open my doors. The man who wins me, wins life, drinks deep  
 22 of the Lord's favour; who fails, fails at his own blame, none to be my  
 enemy is to be in love with death.

## CHAPTER 3

SEE, where wisdom has built herself a house, carved out the barrel  
 of Lebanon pillars of herod. And now, her sacrificial victims slain,  
 she has wine mingled, her banquet spread, this way and that her residents  
 are dispatched, to day keep and day wall, bidding her guests make  
 haste. Simple hearts, she says, draw near my seat to all that lack learning  
 2 this is her cry. Come and eat at my table, come and drink of the wine  
 3 I have brewed for you: say farewell to your childishness, and learn to  
 live; follow all of you in the path that leads to discernment.

<sup>1</sup> Some would give 'made me' as the right translation of the verb used in the Hebrew text. But it is doubtful whether it really has this meaning in the passage cited (e.g., Gen. 14:22), and all through the book of Psalms it is regularly used in the sense of 'accompanying' wisdom.

<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'the open spaces, or the beginnings of the world's day.

(Such work there art, godless souls, that will not be taught or trained; who makes the attempt, gets only injury and abuse for his trouble. With a rash foot never repentance; it will make him thy enemy; only the wise are grateful for a repentance. Ever the wise profit by the opportunity to become wiser yet; ever the godly are the best learners.)<sup>1</sup>

True wisdom begins with the fear of the Lord; he best discerner, who has knowledge of holy things. Long life I bring thee, and a full tale of years; wisdom thyself shall profit, and misdeeds fall only on the rash folk that earned it.

Out upon her silly clamour, the woman that is so crafty, yet how she lugs her nose! At her door she sits, her chair commanding the city's heights, and cries aloud to such as pass by on their hasty errands. Simple hearts, she says, draw near me, and to all that lack learning is this her cry. Stolen waters are sweetest, and bread is better eating when there is none to see. Who shall warn them that dead men are in her company, no guest of hers but is guest of the dark world beneath?

## CHAPTER 10

## Proverbs of Solomon.

**A** FATHER'S smile, a mother's tear, tell of a son well schooled or ill.

No good ever came of money ill gotten; honest living is death's avoiding. Still the Lord gives honesty a full belly, and on the knave's scheming shuts his door.

Idle hand, empty garner, riches come of hard work. (Who trusts in false promises, throws his seed to the winds; as well may he chase wind in flight.)<sup>2</sup> With thee gather in harvest time, a son well schooled? Or sleep the summer round, to thy father's great shame?

Shine the Lord's favour on the just man's head; the sinner in his violent strut will blunder. When blessings are given, the just are remembered with it is the sinner's name that runs.

Warning the wise man hears; the fool talks on, and is ruined.

He walks secure, who walks pure; sinning will yet be found out.

It needs no more than a wink of the eye to bring trouble; what wonder

<sup>1</sup> *ms.* 7-9. There is some reason to suspect distortion in the text here. These verses do not fit naturally into the speech of Wisdom, who is making an express appeal (*verse 4*) to the foolish.

<sup>2</sup> The second half of this verse is not found in the Hebrew text; the Septuagint Greek gives it substantially what *ms.* 12 of *sk.* 9.

11 If the fool who talks turns a hearing?<sup>1</sup> The mouth, for the just man,  
12 is a life-giving well, for the wicked no amount of harm.<sup>2</sup> Harsh is ever  
a ready to pull a quarrel; love passes over all kinds of offence. Slowly  
wise man's lips but found the right word, or fool's back but felt the  
13 word. Wise men measure up their knowledge; a fool's talk is ready  
to pour all.

14 As the rich man's wealth is his stronghold, and the poor man's  
is need his peril, so the doings of the just overturn his flesh life, the  
15 sinner's increase his guilt. Who lives by the lessons he has learned  
finds life; the way is lost when warnings go unheeded.

16 Lying lips that hide malice, foolish lips that spread slander, what a  
17 world of sin there is in talking! Whose heart is said, most pretence is.  
18 Silver refined is the just man's every word, and truth the sinner's every  
19 thought. The just man's talk plays the shepherd to many, while the fool  
dies of his own stirred brain.

20 Of the Lord's gift comes wealth without drudgery.

21 For the fool, it is but a passion to make mischief; to act prudently  
needs all a man's wisdom.

22 Not in vain the sinner fears, the just man hopes; vanished, like  
the morn of yesterday, or never eternally.

23 What iris a man more than visage on the rook, or smoke in the  
eye? A lying messenger.

24 If fear of the Lord brings life, few years shall the wicked have; die  
25 their hopes near while honest folk wait on contentedly. The Lord's  
judgements, what comfort they bring to the innocent, what terror to  
26 the evil-doer! An abiding home never the just lacked yet, or the guilty  
27 found. A just man's talk breeds wisdom, while the sinner's tongue  
is dim harrow; welcome over the one, overgained the other.

## CHAPTER 11

**A** FALSE balance the Lord hates; nothing but full weight will  
content him.

1 Pride is neighbour to dishonesty; humility to wisdom.

2 The innocence of the upright guides them safely; the treacherous  
3 by their own plots are destroyed. When the time for releasing comes,

4 little shall wealth avail; right living is death's avoiding. An honest  
purple clears a man's path; the wicked are entangled by their own

<sup>1</sup>vs. 8, 10. The second half of either verse is the same in the original.

<sup>2</sup>vs. 8, 11. In the Hebrew text, both verses end with the same formula, which the LXX interprets in verse 8 "holiness covers the mouth of the just" and in verse 11 "the mouth of the justness reveals holiness."

scholarship. For his honesty, the upright man shall go free; not so the  
wrong-doer, caught in the meshes of his own net. No hope follows the  
godless in the grave; nothing left, none, of all their anxious longing.  
Honesty shall yet go free, and it leaves no heir to its troubles. False  
speech the hypocrite will use to ruin his neighbors; true knowledge is the  
saving of the just. Thrice honest men, come out of graves, there is  
huzzling all through the city; how should a city stand or fall, but by  
good words from the one, ill counsel from the other?

He speaks loud, who lacks wit; discretion holds her tongue. Who  
hears all tales, keep no secrets; trust none with thy confidence but a loyal  
friend.

It turns the people, that guidance has none; safety ridges where  
no one should.

He who goes bail for a stranger has great harm of it; that man avoid, as  
and sleep sound.

Gracious ways map with a woman returns; man never grew rich as  
her by hardness.<sup>1</sup>

A kindly man is the friend of his own well-being; cruelty will not  
spare its own flesh and blood.

Prudence overbids the godless man wine; wouldst thou be sure of  
thy servants, let honest things be thy crop: money breeds life, evil is  
unlabeled death. A false heart the Lord cannot endure; nothing but  
honest dealing will content him. Depend upon it, the sinner shall  
never be held guiltless; the race of the just shall find acquittal.

A woman fair and fond, a sow ringed with gold.

In the desires of the just only good dwells; frantic dreams are for  
the wicked. One sows, and his seed is spent; another grudges what  
he sows, and in a poor man still; give and thou shalt thrive; he shall  
have abundance, that hoards abundantly. Corn banded shall win thee as  
a curse, men will find a blessing, from the lips of a whole people.  
Plan thou good, thou must not be slow too early; plan thou evil, on  
thy own head it shall recoil. Fall he must, that relies on riches; never  
shall the just fall as he fall. He shall feed on sin, that misleads his own  
household; the fool will be shrew and the wise man master in the end.  
Where right living bears its fruit, a tree of life grows up; the wise man's  
reward is living souls.<sup>2</sup> Give honest men names go through the world as  
unparelleled; what, then, of the godless, what, then, of the sinner?

<sup>1</sup> The word used in the Hebrew text means 'suspension,' but is perhaps a  
false reading for the very similar word meaning 'diligence' (cf. 10-4).

<sup>2</sup> In the second half of the verse, the text is possibly corrupt as it stands,  
it should mean either that the wise man takes other people's lives, or that he  
receives the presents of others as his capital (Gen. 14.14, 15). The main sense  
is not clear.

## CHAPTER 12

**E**VER the friend of admonition is the friend of knowledge; only fools are impatient of warning.

- 1 A kindly man wins the Lord's favour; a schemer is his enemy.
- 2 Wickedness shall never thrive; the just have roots immovable.
- 3 Condemned is his brave, who wins a vigorous wife; sooner let thy bones rot than marry one who shames thee.
- 4 Reasonable thoughts the just conceive; the wicked are all double-dealing; yet, when the accusations of the wicked lay a final snare, the just shall find words to deliver them. A man is their fortress, and no man is afraid of the wicked; only the just have abiding prosperity.
- 5 Good sense is the measure of a man's repute; good hands are ever employed.
- 6 Better be poor, and toil to support thyself, than play the great lord with an empty belly.
- 7 A just man cares for the safety of the beasts he owns; the wicked are heartless through and through.
- 8 Till field and till bullock, idle persons are but foolishness. (So long enjoying thy wine, and there is no strong fortress will win thee success).<sup>1</sup>
- 9 In vanity ambitious the wicked put their trust, but it is heavy that strikes deep root. Ruin comes upon the sinner for a word spoken in anger, while honest men find acquittal. When a man is blessed, it is his own words that bear fruit; never son of Adam but had the lot his deeds deserved.
- 10 A fool is ever right in his own thinking; the wise listen to advice.
- 11 Rich betray anger on the instant, when profane words pass the limit by.
- 12 Nothing but his honest thought a lover of truth declares; a false witness nothing but lies. Rich promises can stain the heart with remorse;<sup>2</sup> a wise word bring healing. Lips that speak the truth shall find mercy; a lie serves but the house of the wicked.
- 13 The schemer's thoughts dwell ever on treachery; for power he doth thy plotting, if thou wouldst have a contrived heart. Nothing can befell the just man to do him hurt; the wicked shall have their fill of mischief.

<sup>1</sup> The second half of this verse is found in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text.

<sup>2</sup> The meaning of the Hebrew text is perhaps rather, 'he who speaks rashly can wound like a sword.'



Lying lips the Lord cannot abide; keep faith if thou wouldst remain to him.

Penitence says less than it knows; the fool's heart cannot contain so its folly.

Busy hands, hands that shall bear the sowing; idle hands, hands that shall bring tribute.

A heart bowed down with anxiety, how a kind word can refresh it as

It is well done to put up with loss for a neighbour's need; the out-  
cast of the dinner do but lead him astray. Never yet did cunning or  
achieve the gain it hoped for; a contented heart is precious as fine  
gold.<sup>1</sup> Wouldst thou retain life, honesty is the high road; by-way is  
there is none but leads to death.

## CHAPTER 13

**B**Y his father's teaching a man grows when only the foolhardy  
will not listen to a warning.

His words yield a crop to content a man's heart; but not for the  
mouthless; they have no stomach but for wrong-doing. Guard thy  
tongue, guard thy soul; thoughtless speech may bring ruin.

Idleness will and will not, both at once; it is hard work that gives  
a full belly.

Honesty shows the false word; the sharer disappointment gives and  
gain.<sup>2</sup> The upright heart is protected by its own innocence; guilt trips  
the feet of the wrong-doer.

Some are sick that nothing lasts; some with a well-laid purse are  
yet poor. A man's wealth may be his own life's ransom; yet will not  
the poor man be children for his poverty.<sup>3</sup>

Welcome the shining beams of a life well lived; the dark-light of the  
wicked glimmers and is gone.

Ever there is wrangling among the proud; wisdom's part is to be guided  
by other men's counsel.

Hidden veins were once spent; the patient heart breeds heat.

Hope deferred, how it crushes a man's spirit! The granted wish,  
a man of life-giving fruit.

<sup>1</sup> The Latin version here disagrees with the Hebrew text, which is obscure and perhaps corrupt.

<sup>2</sup> 'Disappointment gives and gain', according to the Hebrew text, 'behaviour and character'.

<sup>3</sup> The second half of this verse is difficult, and perhaps corrupt.

- 11 Neglect thy sword, whenever it be,<sup>1</sup> and thou art in danger; carry out thy orders, and be at peace.  
Foolishness leads: wonder far in their transgression, but the just are ever playing, ever successful.
- 12 The teaching of the wise is a fountain where men may drink life: far removed from all mortal path. Good instruction breeds gracious thoughts; the headstrong are for the worse. For the prudent, skill guides every action; ignorance betrays the fool.
- 13 Who trust a sinner's reward, fall into mischief by the way; a faithful survey reaches all.
- 14 Come: woe, come: shame from warnings unheeded; he achieves great things who will accept reproach.
- 15 A man ever loses his own way here; no wonder fools cannot abide it: when ill is feared. Wise company brings wisdom; fool he seeks that seek belated.
- 16 Calamity is laid on the heads of wickedness, and honest men shall yet be rewarded. See and ponder: shall be the good man's tale; the sinner here upbraids the nobler men; the rich harvest of those ancestral fields, lack he honest worth, shall be reaped for strangers.<sup>2</sup>
- 17 Spare the rod, and thou art no friend to thy son; over a kind father is quick to punish.
- 18 The just man eats his fill; the godless craves and never has enough.

## CHAPTER 14

**I**T is by woman's wisdom a house is built; a foolish wife pulls it down about her ears.

- 1 Does a man fear the Lord? He holds an even course; the horns his look regard for him.<sup>3</sup>
- 2 Pride hurries from the lips of fools; in modesty of speech the wise find safety.
- 3 No need for a full crib, where corn are scarce; yet ever rich harvest fills of the ox at work.

<sup>1</sup> The sword, whenever it be; the sense of the Hebrew text is probably 'the word of command.'

<sup>2</sup> The Latin appears to contrast this verse with the preceding one; the Hebrew text has 'There is much food in the tillow-lands of the poor, but there are some who are swept away; not for lack of judgment.'

<sup>3</sup> The sense of the Hebrew text is plain; the God-fearing are the right-living; the despisers of God are revealed by their treacherous conduct. The Latin version makes the whole verse into a single sentence, which says that the God-fearing and right-living man is despised by, or (probably) despises, the treacherous.

It is a faithful witness that never lies; the perjurer breathes out lies & recklessly.

Vainly the rash aspire to wisdom; the discerning come by their knowledge with little pains. On thy way, and let the fool go his; good sense is a strange language to him. Prudence picks its way wisely; the fool blunders and is lost. Fools make light of the guilt that needs atonement, and leave heaven men to enjoy the Lord's favour.<sup>1</sup>

Heart's bitterness none may know but the heart that feels it; no spying stranger can tell when it finds relief.

Fall it must, the house of the wicked; where the upright dwell, it all is increase.

The right road in a man's thinking may be one whose goal is death; joy blends with grief, and laughter mingles with tears. The home-sprite shall have a taste of his own ill-doings, and honest men shall have the better of him.

The simpleton takes all on trust; wisdom considers each step. (A treacherous man no part shall have; better shall a wise servant thrive and prosper).<sup>2</sup> Caution teaches the wise to shun danger, the fool is carried away by rash confidence. The haughty man blunders, as readily as the schemer makes mistakes. Folly is the simpleton's heir; no skill crowns the wise.

Vice lies prostrate before virtue, the sinner at the gate of the just. Of the beggar, his own neighbours grow weary; wealth never lacks its friends. Shame on the man who holds his neighbour in contempt; a merry to the poor brings a blessing. (Marry he soon, who puts his trust in the Lord).<sup>3</sup> They follow a false path, that plot mischief; merry as and faithless merry and truth shall find.

Hard work is sure reward; of shattering comes only poverty.

Made rich, the wise are crowned, the folly of the thoughtless will be folly yet.

Men owe their lives to truthful witnesses; the very breath of the liar perishes in violence.

The fear of the Lord gives strong confidence, beguiles hope from the father to the children. The fear of the Lord is a fountain where men may drink life, far removed from all mortal peril.<sup>4</sup>

Great people, great king, it is for want of men crowns are lost.

<sup>1</sup> The first half of this verse is absent in the Hebrew text. "The Lord's favour" literally, "treasure" (if the two halves of the verse are to be parallel, divine favour must be meant).

<sup>2</sup> The words enclosed in brackets do not appear in the Hebrew text; they occur in the Septuagint Greek text verse 21 of the foregoing chapter.

<sup>3</sup> The words pointed in brackets are peculiar to the LXX.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 15.33 above.

- 20 Patience comes of sovereign prudence, impatience of unchained  
 21 folly. Peace of mind is health of body; more than all else, every wants  
 the frame.  
 22 He who oppresses the poor, insults man's Maker; him if thou wouldst  
 honour, take pity on human need.  
 23 When the wicked is paid in his own coin, there is an end of him;  
 at death's door, the just still hope.  
 24 In the discerning heart, wisdom finds a resting-place; even among  
 fools it can impart learning.<sup>1</sup>  
 25 Duty well done, a whole nation becomes great; suffer whole peoples  
 for guilt incurred.  
 26 A king shows favour to a wise servant; disappoint him, and thou  
 shalt feel his anger.

## CHAPTER 15

**A** GENTLE answer is a quarrel averted; a word that gives pain  
 2 does but fan the flame of contention. The speech of the wise is  
 3 learning's seedling; the fool bubbles on. Go where thou wilt, the Lord's  
 4 eye is watching; good can evil escape his scrutiny. Tongue that speaks  
 peaceably is a tree whose fruit gives life; tongue undisciplined can break  
 hearts.

5 He is a fool that makes light of his father's warnings; would he but  
 listen to reproof, he should be prudent yet.

(Might is more where right is more; root and branch the sinner  
 6 shall be plucked up.)<sup>2</sup> The just man's house guards its treasure well;  
 the hopes of the wicked are all confusion.

7 The talk of the wise is a seed-ground of learning; the thoughts of  
 fools are all matched with it.

8 From the wicked man's sacrifice the Lord turns away with loathing;  
 9 only the just with their vows win his favour. The whole course of the  
 sinner's life he cannot brook; grant the right, if thou wouldst win  
 10 his love. Forsake the right path, and correction shall soon harden  
 11 thee; grow weary of reproof, and thy life shall pay for it. Shall the  
 Lord read the secrets of the discouraging grove, and not man's heart?

12 Warn the headstrong, and thou wilt get no thanks for it; cut for him  
 the company of the wise.

<sup>1</sup> In the second half of the verse, the Hebrew text appears to mean, 'fool is the image being of fools (it makes itself known)'; it is perhaps correct. The Latin version reads 'and it will instruct all fools,' probably a scribe's error for 'And it will instruct even fools.'

<sup>2</sup> The words enclosed in brackets occur in the Syriac text, but not in the Hebrew text.

One heart, gay looks and thoughts crush the spick.

15

Truth is the quest of discerning minds, trifling the pasture-ground is of the foolish.

To the friendship, every day brings trouble, but every day is a friend as day is a contented heart. Better a humble lot, and the fear of the Lord is present, than great riches that leave a man unsettled. Better sit down in a dish of herbs seasoned with charity, than feast on a dainties on to ill will.

Any traveler can provoke a quarrel; it needs a patient man to lay it to bed.

Illnesses flash over a hedge of thorns in its path; the man of duty is wiser as unharmed.

A father well content, a mother delighted, tell of a son's wisdom or a mortal folly.

A man of little sense is in love with his follies; prodigious leaps to in chosen path. Careless looking, all dangers go unseen; with the advice in of many, they should have thriven. There are times when a counselor is his good sense to be proud; nothing better than the right word spoken.

A mind well schooled sees the way of life stretching upwards, leading as away from the pit beneath.

A house where pride reigns the Lord will pull down; at last, will as have to succumbing on the hands of the friendship widens. The schemes as of wickedness he shatters; the dreams of innocence he loves, and brings true.<sup>1</sup> Let wisdom lead thee away, thy house shall be rejoiced long as life is his, who counts the hills. (Kindness and honour are his's proudest; over it is the fear of the Lord turns men away from harm).<sup>2</sup>

Attentive and docile is the upright heart; from the lips of the wicked is comes mischief in full flood. From the wicked, the Lord withhold; is his promise, listens only to the prayer of the just.

The darts of hope, how it darts the heart! Good news, how it leads as eager to a man's heart!

A man's ear ever watches<sup>3</sup> to the discipline that brings life; no man as pay shall be welcome thenceforward, but the wise. He holds his as life cheap, that will not listen to a warning; heed reproval, and he saves of thy soul. It is the fear of the Lord teaches the lessons of wisdom as humbly goes fast, and honour comes in her train.

<sup>1</sup> The second half of this verse reads, in the Hebrew text, 'but pleasant words are pure'; it is not certain in what sense.

<sup>2</sup> The Latin version gives the second clause twice over (see III.4 below).

## CHAPTER 14

- M**AN'S heart is ever full of devising; from the Lord comes the ordering of right speech.<sup>1</sup> His own path man seems, and nothing is seen aside, but the divine balance weighs our thoughts; share with the Lord the burden of all thy doings, if thou wouldst be always in thy intent.
- 2 God, who made all, made all for his own purposes, even the golden man, with doom awaiting him.
- 3 A proud man the Lord holds in abhorrence; depend upon it, no acquittal shall be found. (To do right, that is the first step on the way of blessedness, a more welcome thing in God's sight than any sacrifice or man's own effort.)<sup>2</sup> Kindness and honour are sin's purging; ever it is the fear of the Lord that turns men away from harm. Live as the Lord would have thee live, and he will make even thy enemies into well-wishers.
- 4 Better a penny honestly come by than great revenues ill gotten.
- 5 Heart of man must plan his course, but his steps will fall as the Lord guides them.
- 6 Speaks king, speaks cradle; never a word aches. Scale and balance are emblems of the Lord's own justice; no weight in the merchant's scale but is of divine fashioning. Wrong-doing the king will not abide; on right his own throne sits. Kings are for better rule; free-spoken is well loved. The king's throne is death at thy door; wisdom will appease it; his smile is life; not man welcomes the spring rain, than royal favour.
- 7 Not of gold or silver be thy house; make wisdom thine, discernment thine, more precious than these.
- 8 The just man travels by the high road, and from harm, watching his path anxiously, so he values his life.
- 9 Foolsomness comes first, and ruin does behind in; pride ever goes before a fall. Better a bundle of among peaceful folk, than all the spoil a tyrant's friendship can bring thee.
- 10 Well versed in doctrine, happiness thou shalt win; trust in the Lord, and find a blessing. Good judgment a wise heart can share, winning rewards bring greater price yet. The prudent man doubts from a living stream; fools only learn the lessons of their folly. Wisdom dwells within heart to mouth, and leads the lips persuasion. Honey lord

<sup>1</sup> The bearing of this maxim is uncertain.<sup>2</sup> The second half of this verse is found in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text.

cannot vie with well-framed words, for heart's comfort and body's refreshment. The right road is a man's thinking may be one whose is good in death.

No better friend dexterity has than appetite; hunger drives a man to do his task.

Ever the godless man digs a well of mischief, ever his lips set a snare. In his the scheming that breeds quarrels, the whispering that divides his men die, the love of wrong that misleads his neighbours and carries them off in his evil way; spell-bound with dreams of treachery, he shuts his lips as tight and goes about his false word.<sup>1</sup>

His prize is measurable as old age, and it is won by innocence of life. A Palace is worth more than treasure, better a disciplined heart than a stunted cry.

Into the lap's fold the lie falls lap-bound, but the Lord rules the whole.

## CHAPTER 17

**B**BETTER dry crest and grey head, than a house where all is feasting and all is quarrelling.

Where men are flock, slaves will be masters, and share the inheritance: like him have.

For silver and gold, furnace and crucible; men's hearts are for the Lord's smelting.

Deceit will give head to injurious talk, false faith losses to the slander.

He who shares contempt to the poor, insults man's Maker as thy own pull thou wilt take delight in another's ruin.

Crows of old age, when a man sees his children's children; pride of a youth, when a man can boast of the fathers that begot him.

Science talk matches ill with folly, lying speech with reality.

When a man has hope in view, like a jewel it shines before him; look as when he will, his way lies clear.<sup>2</sup>

If good will be thy quest, hide the wrong done; gently rebuke the board of friendship.

One word of warning is a prudent man's ear does more than a hundred lashes given to a fool. Still the godless man will be fire burning in

<sup>1</sup> In the last half of this verse, the Hebrew text is usually understood to mean 'he gives readiness with a wink of the eye.'

<sup>2</sup> The sense of the Hebrew text seems to be, 'A tribe is a reliance for him who even by whatever he name, he prospereth.'

- 14 up strife, till at last an angel visits him with an kindly message. Better  
 meet the she-bear rift of her cub, than a fool in his blind confidence.  
 15 Evil shall still haunt his dwelling, that repays kindness with injury.  
 16 Who began the quarrel? He who let loose the flood-gates of it, and  
 before he can suffer injury, he stands aside from the debate.<sup>1</sup>  
 17 Misjudgment the Lord will never shide, whether the guilty go free,  
 or the innocent are constrained.  
 18 Little the fool's wealth avails; he may not buy wisdom if he would.  
 (Build high, and court thy ruin; despite learning, and thou shalt come  
 to mischief).<sup>2</sup>  
 19 He is thy friend, who is thy friend at all times; of a brother's love  
 there is no test like adversity.  
 20 He is a fool, that lightly goes bail for his friend.  
 21 He loves a feud, that loves contention; build high, and court thy  
 ruin. False heart never found happiness, nor lying tongues escaped  
 mischief.  
 22 A fool's birthday is a day of shame; never father had joy of a sonlike  
 son.  
 23 A cheerful heart makes a quick recovery; it is crushed spirits that  
 wear a man's frame.  
 24 Our comen bring from houses, and the godless man turns justice  
 aside from its course.  
 25 Wisdom is a beacon-light to the discerning; the fool's eyes roam this  
 way and that, as wide as earth. Fools fool, his father's name, sorrow of the  
 mother that bore him.  
 26 Foul shame it is to make the innocent suffer, to strike a blow against  
 the chains that given redress.  
 27 Stupid is he who has skill to check his tongue; learned he is that  
 knows how to spare his breath. Let him keep his own counsel; a fool  
 may pass for a wise man; stout lips can claim discernment.

## CHAPTER 18

**N**ONE so quick to find proverbs,<sup>3</sup> as he that would break with a  
 friend; he is in fault continually.

- 2 For prudent warnings a fool has no stomach; nothing will come but  
 to bite his own thought.

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text is commonly interpreted as meaning, "The beginning of a quarrel is as when a man opens a shaken jar; let it alone, before evil be made out."

<sup>2</sup> The second part of this verse is found in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text.

<sup>3</sup> "Quick to find proverbs" in the Hebrew text, "hiffik."



Little the galled man seeks of it, when he falls into sin's snare, but shame and reproach go with him.

Man's utterance has currents like the waters that run deep; from wisdom's well flows a stream in full flood.<sup>1</sup>

Fool scarce it is to court favour with the wrong-doer by turning a justice aside from its course.

A fool's talk is for ever unrolling like; let him but open his mouth, a blow will follow. From his own words his sailing comes, from his own lips the snare. Innocent enough were the words of the back-biter, yet their poison slake deep into a man's belly.

(How scarce every fair discourse; womanish words shall go hungry.)<sup>2</sup>  
Deceit and flattery go to work, then set one brother so that work's undone.

No stronghold like the Lord's name; there the just take refuge, high above reach. What shield has the rich man? His own possessions; he is secure that is by a wall impregnable, yet burns as pendant when rule is in sorrow; hostility is the sure-chamber of misdeeds.

Let a man hear the tale out before he answers, or he is a fool manifest, is marked out for shame.

All mortal like the spirit of man can bear, if the spirit itself be impatient, is there is no lightning his lot.

Fear of the discerning heart, quest of the wise man's ear, is to learn a truth.

The gift made, how it opens a man's path for him, wins him access as to the great!

An innocent man is the first to lay bare the truth; let his neighbour reprove and reach him as he will.<sup>3</sup>

The lot brings souls to an end; goodness itself must bow to the lot's device.

When brother helps brother, death is the strength of a fortress; its own is like a city gate barred, unscalable.<sup>4</sup>

As man speaks, folly shall find its way; a man's own words bear in

<sup>1</sup> The sense and the bearing of this maxim are open to dispute.

<sup>2</sup> The words printed in brackets are found in the Septuagint text, but not in the Hebrew text.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'A fool that is the first to accuse himself', but this can hardly mean that he confesses his guilt, since there would be no need, in that case, for interposition by his neighbours. The sense will be rather that he makes admissions which in free spite tell against his innocence. The Hebrew text is obscure, with some difficulty, it is interpreted as meaning, 'He who speaks first is always (apparently) in the right.'

<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew text here is usually rendered, 'A brother compassed (girdled) in armour is his own city; a strong city, (such) fortifications are like the base of a fortress.'

- 9 the fruit) that must needs comfort him. Of life and death, tongue holds the keys; and it loquaciously<sup>1</sup> and it will require them.
- 10 A good wife found is treasure found; the Lord is filling thy cup with happiness. (A good wife sent away is treasure cast away; leave to fools, and godless fools, the adulterous embrace).<sup>2</sup>
- 11 Fools men must escape, for the rich to see them.
- 12 A man seduced to sin by fellowship will prove a better friend to thee than thy own kin.<sup>3</sup>

## CHAPTER 19

- BETTER the poverty which keeps to honest ways, than the lot of a rich man who never learned to speak truth.<sup>1</sup> Luck learning, all is not well within; over the busy scramble. Tripped by his own folly, a man runs his heart out, finding fault with the Lord.
- 4 Riches will make thee new friends a many, proving not those of the old.
- 5 Perjury will bring its own punishment; never was he yet that escaped his doom.
- 6 Sifted a many the princely heart shall have; give, and thou shalt find friends. The beggar scorns out his kinsmen; his friends, too, will shun him.
- 7 Who knows life talk, comes home empty-handed; as thou lovest thy life get wisdom; disengagement at thy side, thou shalt speed well.
- 8 Perjury will bring its own punishment; never was he yet that met his doom.
- 9 If days, when fools live in comfort were yet, when straits were thy own masters.
- 10 Prudence is wisdom's livery; there is no such host as a wrong over-coated.
- 11 Of the king's throne because, as of lion roaring welcome as dew on the grass his realm.
- 12 Great hurt is it to be a fool's father; he has a roof that drips unendingly, who is husband to a fool. Home and board a man may inherit, it is the Lord's gift only, if he have a wife that minds her ways.
- 13 Rich brings the sleep that has no waking; idle hands, empty belly.

<sup>1</sup> 'Loquaciously' is usually interpreted as meaning 'brilliantly,' but 'with due discretion' may be meant.

<sup>2</sup> The initial part of this verse is found in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text.

<sup>3</sup> This verse is very obscure, and perhaps corrupt, with little help: the Hebrew has a contrast between his wisdom and godless friends.

<sup>4</sup> The word 'fool' does not occur in the Hebrew text.

Law observed is life preserved; the careless step leads the way to a death.

Refrain the poor, and lend to the Lord; he will repay faithfully. <sup>10</sup>

Chasten thy son well, nor despair of his amendment; discipline thyself is sweet to his son.

He injures himself, that is ungovernable in rage; every advantage he takes does but injure him the more.<sup>1</sup> Give heed to counsel, accept reconviction, and thou shalt be wise at last. Thought lodges thought in man's heart; the Lord's will stands firm.

Poverty is the school of piety; better need than idleness. Fear of the Lord leads on to life, life whose all is conscientious, and no ill may come.

With folded hands the sluggish sit by, and never put hand to mouth.<sup>2</sup> <sup>12</sup>

The task for the restless, if thou wouldst turn a fool into a wise man; only cool heads will profit by a rebuke.

Shame on the wretch that brings ruin on his own father, drives a his own mother out of doors.

Never weary, my son, of giving heed to warnings; never let the counsels of experience pass thee by.<sup>3</sup>

Out on the faithless witness that counts right; the sinful souls that are ever greedy for wrong-doing! There is a doom awaits the reckless; in there are thick snares ready for the fool's back.

## CHAPTER 20

**A** RUCKLESS counsellor is wise, strong drink a riotous friend; the man who is swayed by them, will not win. Beware of the king's power, as of lion roaring challenge it, and thy life is forfeit. Well may he least, that keeps clear of strife; every fool will be quarrelling.

Too cold to plough, says Sloth vainly, when harvest comes, he will go a-begging.

Prudence counsel is a well buried deep in man's heart; but the wise know how to draw from it. Many there are that pass for kindly souls, but a faithful friend is hard to come by. An upright man that goes armed with honest intent, leaves a blessing to his children. Let a

<sup>1</sup> This verse, in the Hebrew text, is of very doubtful interpretation. The sense is that of verse 10.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Latin version, the sluggish hides his hands under his arm-pits; according to the Hebrew text, he hides them in the dish that lies in front of him.

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew text here lacks the negative, and yields no good sense as it stands.

king rule justly, wrong-doing shall be winnowed away under his scrutiny.

- 19 Who dares to boast, My heart is unswayed now, I have cleansed myself of every fault?
- 20 One balance for getting and one for giving, one yard-measure for selling and one for buying, the Lord will not ensnare.
- 21 Watch a boy even at his play, thou canst tell whether his heart is as pure and true. The ear that listens, the watchful eye, are both of the Lord's fashioning.
- 22 Love not thy sleep, or poverty will overtake thee unawares; the open eye means a full belly.
- 23 A poor thing, says the hypocrite, a poor thing! Then off he goes, and boasts of it.
- 24 Gold thou mayst have in abundance, and jewels a many, but the finest wire of all is wise speech.
- 25 Does a man go bail for a stranger? Without more ado, take his garments from him; who trusts without knowledge, forfeits the pledge.
- 26 Ill-gotten wealth is bread most appetising, that will yet turn to grit in the mouth.
- 27 Counsel is the sure buttress of determination; woe most ever he wins by rashcraft.
- 28 With the whisperer, thou goest about open-mouthed on his errand of gossip, never throw in thy lot.
- 29 In deepest night the lamp of his hopes shall be quenched, that turns upon father or mother with a curse. The inheritance too soon comes to by, too late thou shalt find unblessed. Never promise thyself magnanimity or even the Lord's boon, and redress shall be thine. One weight for getting and one for giving, the Lord cannot ensnare; a false balance is a just wrong. Every step man takes is of the Lord's choosing; and thou, poor mortal, wouldst thou plot out thy path?
- 30 Rascals, to their ruin, involve<sup>1</sup> the Holy Ones with even they afterwards repent.
- 31 Foes and flail a wise king has for the ill-done.
- 32 Man's spirit is a lamp the Lord gives, to search out the hidden corners of his being.
- 33 What is a king's best body-guard? Mercy and steadfastness; on money his throne rests.
- 34 Youth has strong arms to boast of; old age white hairs for a crown.
- 35 Harts that bray cruelly, charibonians left deep within, are slain't thou steadily.

<sup>1</sup> Our present text of the Vulgate, probably through a copyist's error, has 'involve.' There is no reference in the Hebrew text to the involving of angels, but cf. Job. 5.1.

## CHAPTER 21

THE thoughts of a king are in the Lord's hand, whence he can choose  
which way he wills. His own path man sees, and nothing sees man, 1  
but the divine balance weighs our thoughts. Mercy shown and justice 2  
done win the Lord's favour beyond any merit. Lastly looks, proud 3  
hearts the hopes<sup>a</sup> of the wicked are all in vain.

Ever diligent please the pious; sloth must be content to starve. 4

Illusion it is and madness, wealth to win by perjury; death has caught 5  
those in his snare. Wicked men, that refuse the right, by their own 6  
violence come to ruin. Crooked is man's course, and before his own 7  
action, but pure souls there are whose life runs true.

Better lodge in a garret than share thy house with a world. 8

A godless man has set his heart on ill-doing; no work has he for 9  
his fellow. The lack for the sudden, if thou wouldst turn a fool here 10  
is a wise man; a wise man, and he shall learn yet. Good bread the just 11  
man gives to the slaver's household, in hope of diverting sinners from 12  
harm.<sup>b</sup>

Who shuts his ear to the poor man's plea, himself one day shall 13  
plead in vain.

Give a secret gift in thy bosom for thy enemy's appealing; the 14  
open hand no grudge will ever feel.

Right done, honest folk rejoice, and heavens tremble. 15

Scry from the path thou wast taught, and thou shalt lodge with the 16  
dead.

Of good comes want; he grows not rich that loves wine and meat. 17

The wicked is still the price of the just man's ransom; for honest 18  
folk, treachery pays the price.<sup>c</sup>

Better dwell in a wilderness than with a world who rail at thee. 19

Precious store there is and good cheer where justice dwells;<sup>d</sup> the 20  
fool devours all at once.

<sup>a</sup> Literally, 'the hope,' or according to the Hebrew text 'the fortified ground.' The sense is doubtful, for it is clear whether 'a fool' refers to sinful actions or has its literal sense of missing a mark.

<sup>b</sup> There is no agreement as to the meaning of this verse; the Hebrew text has 'dug down or' instead of 'dug from' and some think that 'the just' refers not to a just man but to Almighty God.

<sup>c</sup> Some think this means that in periods of general calamity the wicked suffer, while the just go free; but even so the phrasing of the verse would be obscure.

<sup>d</sup> The Hebrew text has 'wisdom' instead of 'justice,' and the reference is presumably to material (not spiritual) blessings, which the just squander and the wise man saves up.

- 11 Honest living be thy quest and bloody deeds, life shall be thine,  
 12 and blessing, and honour. Wisdom can save the fortune great warrior  
 13 bold, and bring low his boasted strength. Guard lips and tongue, so  
 14 thou wouldst guard thy life from harm. I know one, his Rashness is  
 the cause of him, that is all proud air, and does nothing but in a great  
 taking of scorn.  
 15 Day-dreams are the sluggard's downfall; work his hands will save, all  
 16 day long dreaming and scheming, while honest men never spare them-  
 selves, nor take their ease.  
 17 Tainted is the sinner's sacrifice; the hand that offers it is stained  
 18 with guilt. The false witness shall meet his doom; obey the con-  
 19 mandment, and thy pleadings shall triumph. The ill-deed has eyes  
 for nothing but his wanton designs; the upright sees well his path.  
 20 Wisdom is more, prudence is more, counsel is more that can be  
 21 matched against the Lord's will; well armed thy horse may be on  
 the eve of battle, but the Lord sends victory.

## CHAPTER 22

- P R E C I O U S beyond all treasure is good repute; not gold or silver is so  
 1 worth the winning, as to be loved. Rich and poor dwell ever side by  
 side, God's creatures both of them.  
 2 When ill times come, prudence is on his guard, and takes refuge;  
 the army march on, and pay the penalty.  
 3 Humility brings fear of the Lord, and sheweth riches, honour  
 and long life.  
 4 Sulk and outcrop break the path of the wicked; as thou lovest life,  
 keep thy discourse.  
 5 There is a proverb, Youth will be served, and when a man has grown  
 old, he will have his own way still.  
 6 Rich rules poor, debars must wait on ordinar.  
 7 Who sows mischief, reaps a sorry crop; as long, the flail of his  
 8 tyranny will have done its work.<sup>1</sup> For every loaf of bread given to the  
 hungry, blessing shall be the reward of kindly heart. (A renowned  
 victory be mine, that is a bestower of gifts, and living men are the  
 spoils of it.)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The sense of the Hebrew text is different: 'Tame a boy in the way that is best for him, and when he is old he will not leave it.'

<sup>2</sup> In the second half of this verse, the Latin (not the Hebrew) would allow us to translate, 'he will be brought to us and by the flail of his own violence.'

<sup>3</sup> The sentence in brackets is found in the Syriac version, but not in the Hebrew text. The sense of its second half is uncertain, but cf. Gen. 14.16.

Banish the reckless spirit, and strife goes out with him; there are no  
aid of quarrelling and of dispute.

Love purity of heart, and thou shalt find such precious words as shall be  
wiser than a king's friendship. True knowledge has the Lord's smile for its  
its protecting the scholar's cause he will overthrow.

Out? says Elsie, why, there is a line without; wouldn't they have a  
one chain in the open street?

Like a deep pit is the flattery of wanton wife; they only are sustained, in  
whom the Lord loves life.

Booth's mind is loaded with a pack of folly, that needs the rod of  
of correction to strike it.

Oppress the poor for thy enrichment, and as long a richer man's a  
chain shall impoverish thee.<sup>1</sup>

Wouldst thou but give heed, and listen to wise counsel, nix thou art  
my warnings to heart! Digest them well, and they shall bring back a  
sweet taste to thy lips; to all thy own heart too with confidence in the Lord,  
is the sum of my present teaching. Not once nor twice have we  
I wanted thee and instructed thee, so as to ground thee in true doctrine, as  
and send thee home supplied with ready answers concerning it.

Never oppress the poor; his poverty protects him; never bear hard on  
the friendless at law; be sure the Lord will grant them justice, and a  
chain life for life. Never let a quarrel, a man of angry words, be thy  
friend; go thy way, and let him go his; ill habits are soon learned, to the  
sudden peril of thy life. Leave it to others to engage themselves, and go to  
bail for their neighbour's debts; for thyself, thou hast no means of pay-  
ment; wouldn't thou see the clothes stripped from thy back? Put not on  
beyond the ancient bounds which thy fathers have set. Shall one the man  
whose task is debtly done; he is for the court, no man's service shall  
be till.

## CHAPTER 23

**W**HEN thou art sitting at table with a prince, mark well what is set  
before thee, and have thou thy appetite under control, guard as  
with a drawn knife thy gullet. Harder thou never after these good things  
of life; they are laid to have thee.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Latin version here gives the most intelligible meaning of a man whose  
meaning has been much disputed.

<sup>2</sup> At first sight, this passage suggests the danger of poisoning; but since no  
such occurrences are mentioned in the Old Testament, we should perhaps  
understand that the prince is trying to exact some advantage out of his guest  
by taking him off his guard.

- 4 Do not be as pains to amass riches; let thy scheming<sup>1</sup> have its bounds.  
 5 Never let thy eyes soar to the wealth that is beyond thy reach, eagle-  
 winged against thy parent.  
 6 Shun the riggard's table; not for thee his dainties. Abstracted he  
 sits, like the seethroper brooding over false dreams. Eat and drink, be  
 rich thou, but his mind is far away. For that grudging food thou wilt  
 have no stomach; all gracious speech will die away on thy tongue.<sup>2</sup>  
 7 Speak not with fools for thy banquet; of thy warning utterance they  
 will seek nothing.  
 8 Leave undisturbed the landmarks of friendship fold, nor approach  
 9 on the orphan's patrimony; a strong Champion they have, to guard  
 their refuge.  
 10 Still let thy heart be attentive to warnings, open be thy ear to words  
 11 of instruction. Nor ever from child of thine withhold chastisement;  
 12 he will not die under the rod; rather, the rod thou wisdest shall break  
 13 the pride of his prey. Wise heart of thine, my son, is glad heart of  
 14 mine; speak thou aright, all my being shall. Do not envy others  
 15 their good fortune, but abide in the fear of the Lord continually; the  
 future holds blessings for thee, never shall that hope play thee false.  
 16 Listen, then, my son, and show thyself wise, keeping still an even  
 17 course. Be not of their company, that drink deep and pile the dishes  
 18 high at their revels; ruined they shall be, set and speechless, and  
 19 woe from their drunken sleep to find themselves drowned in rage.  
 20 Thine to obey the father who begot thee, nor leave thy mother without  
 21 reverence in her gray hair; truth to cover, hold wisdom, and still  
 22 command, and discernment for married households. Joy there is and  
 23 pride in an upright man's beginning for the glad father of a wise son;  
 24 each joy let thy father have, each pride be hers, the mother who bore  
 thee.  
 25 My son, give me the gift of thy heart, teach closely the path I show  
 26 thee. What pit so deep as the harbor's good, what cause holds so close  
 27 to winter winds? Like a fished the larks beside the way, a dusky  
 peck to all that forget their woe.  
 28 Unhappy son of an unhappy father, who is this, ever brooding, ever  
 29 killing, scarred but not from battle, blood-shot of eye? Who but the  
 30 scorpion that sits long over his wound? Look not at the wine's sunny  
 glow, sparkling there in the glass beside thee; how intoxicating is alcohol  
 31 Yet at last sorrow bites not so fatally, poison is death like the basilisk's  
 32 own. Eyes that stray to forbidden charms, a mind unaring thoughts that

<sup>1</sup> Literally 'pretensions.'

<sup>2</sup> See 4-6. The language of this passage is analyzed throughout, and it is hard to find words that we have found the right due to its meaning.



are none of thine, shall make thee helpless as mariner aloof in mid ocean, as when the tiller drops from the helmsman's dewy grasp. What! thou a wit! say, flows all wisdom, sounds that tell no thing! Could I but come to myself, and be back, even now, at my wits!

# CHAPTER 24

**N**OT for thee to smother wrong-doers, and aspire to be of their company; what minds are theirs, who think only of men's undoing, what talk, whose every word is treachery!

No foundation for a house like wisdom, no buttress like discretion; a no furnishing may be found for the rooms of it so rare and so precious, as true knowledge. Only the wise are strong; well taught is firm of a nerve. War must be planned first, before thou wage it, and be with a proper host who meet alike stoutly: wisdom hangs high beyond the fool's reach, unguessed he needs when there are consultations at the gate.<sup>1</sup>

Conceal thy close thought to evil ends, and thou wilt earn no better a name than mischief-maker. Craft of his own the fool has, but all used to serve the lawless rage!<sup>2</sup> so men our stomachs.

What, hang thy hands down in time of need? Linger that thou wilt, as Thine to cheer the doomed, to cheer the pillars of thy pity: not is glad thy lack of strength, when its, the weakness of all hearts, the Saviour of thy life, knows all, sees all, and requires the actions of men.

Sweet to thy palate, my son, is honey from the stocks; why then, eat it but wise teaching is no less thy soul's food, to-morrow's resource, and a constant sustaining.

Like not in vain, treacherously, to depose the houses where honest men take their ease; never thou the just may stumble, and rise to a chair fast again, it is the wicked fall headlong into ruin. Not thine to triumph over a fallen foe; that thrill of rejoicing in thy heart over his calamity the Lord will see, and little love, his vengeance may yet change as its course. Do not be impatient when the wicked thrive, do not envy the wiles of evil-doers; villainy has no hope in store, its light flickers and is gone.

Fear God, my son, and thou the king have nothing to do with malice contents. How watchful their rule, how swift fall, from either hand, is the blood!

Many mansions of the wise. It is ill done, to let partiality sway thy w

<sup>1</sup> The meaning of the Hebrew we have is doubtful.

<sup>2</sup> The lawless rage; literally, 'the consumption' The word used in the Hebrew text obviously implies rash folly, and is here inappropriate.

- 14 judgments: if thou acquit the guilty, what race will have a good word  
 15 for thee, what people will love thee? Condemn him, and thou shalt  
 have wisdom; blessings shall fall on thy head.  
 16 The right word spoken unto all like a kiss on the lips.<sup>1</sup>  
 17 Be thy first care what thou wilt have; till thy hands first with all diligence  
 have build up thy house.  
 18 Do not come forward as a witness against thy neighbour; wouldst  
 19 thou spread lying tales? Nor be content to say, I am but serving him  
 as he served me; I pay off old scores.  
 20 Passing by field or vineyard where idleness reigned and improvidence,  
 21 what sight I have seen! Nudes were everywhere, holes had covered  
 22 the ground, the stone wall was ruinous. That sight I seek to banish,  
 23 thou'st a warning in that ill example. Sleep on (thought I) a little longer,  
 24 yea, a little longer, a little longer pillow head on hand; ay, but poverty  
 will not wait, the day of distress will not wait; like an armed vagabond  
 it will fall upon thee!<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER 29

THESE are more of Solomon's proverbs, copied out by Ezechias' messengers, that was king of Juda.

- 1 For mysteries unfathomable, praise God; for mysteries revealed, the  
 2 king. High as heaven thou must look, deep as earth, are the mind of kings  
 3 shall be made known to thee. Kid silver of doves, and the cup shines  
 4 brighter, did the court of Israel, and the throne stand firm. Never play  
 5 the great lord at court, and mingle with men of rank; who would not  
 rather be bestowed to a higher place, than be put to the blush, and in the  
 king's presence?<sup>3</sup>  
 6 When men go to law, do not disclose hastily what thy eyes have wit-  
 7 nessed;<sup>4</sup> it may be thou hast misread a friend's name, and there is no  
 8 doing the mischief. To thy friend's private ear open the wrongs, win the  
 9 man's pardon, and he, hearing it, will turn on thee with reproaches, nor  
 will thou lightly recover thy good name. (Favour and friendship are thy  
 10 protectors to lose them is a foul blot.)<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The phrase, in the original, runs simply 'The witness' right words thou'lt'; the most forcing of it can only be conjectured.

<sup>2</sup> See 22, 24, for 4.10, 11 above.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. 14.8-10.

<sup>4</sup> 'What thy eyes have witnessed'; some interpretation of the Hebrew text would connect the words so rendered with the preceding HEBREW.

<sup>5</sup> The words enclosed in brackets are found in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text.

Like a box of gold amid silver treasure it shines not, the right word is spoken. Golden saying nor pearl drop fits so well, as wise reproof is given to a wise listener. Find a trusty messenger; not snow in harvest: a time will bring thee more relief. Storm-wreck and cloud and no rain is to follow; such think he who thus boasts much, and nothing accomplished.

A prince, in his forbearance,<sup>1</sup> may yet be won over to thy cause; a hard heart given place to soft tongue.

Honey if thou find, eat thy fill and no more; nothing comes of surfeit is but vomiting. Rare be thy visit to a neighbour; he will soon have it enough, and weary of thee.

What is worse than jealousy, sword, and arrow all at once? One that is borne false witness against his neighbour. What is more foul than a rising oath, or spikened foot? A false friend turned in the hour of need; as well lose thy cloak in mid winter. Vinegar gets ill with nutmeg, so and song with a disconcerted heart. (Mock cannot fret garment, or warm wood, as cure the heart).

Rejoice thy enemy? Here is thy chance; find him. Thine he? Of thy well let him drink. So doing, thou wilt keep burning coals upon his head, and for thyself, the Lord will recompense thee.<sup>2</sup>

The north wind stops rain, and a storm the backdoor. 22

Better lodge in a garret than share thy house with a scold.<sup>3</sup> 23

Good news from a far land, refreshing as cold water to parched lips. 24

Poisoned the spring, poisoned the well, what honest men how down is before kings.

A surfeit home, though it be of honey; search too high, and the brightness shall dimmle thee.<sup>4</sup> Like a city unravelled by her defenceless, is that cannot master himself, but over speaks his mind.

## CHAPTER 26

AS well snow in summer or rain in harvest, as honour paid to a fool. Light as a bird of passage, light as sparrow on the wing, the cause is that is undeserved shall reach thee.

Whip for horse, bridle for ass, and reed a rod for the fool's back: 1

<sup>1</sup> Some would render "through thy forbearance," but we should hardly expect a subject's attitude towards his prince to be so detailed.

<sup>2</sup> See 22, 23. See Rom. 12.18 and note there.

<sup>3</sup> Suggested from 22.6 above.

<sup>4</sup> The second half of this verse has given rise to much confusion. It runs, loosely, in the Hebrew, "and the searching out of their glory, glory." The rendering given above is that personally intended by the Latin, but it is difficult to derive this or any meaning from the Hebrew text as it stands.

- 4 Leave the fool's challenge unanswered, and prove thyself wiser; or answer it, if thou wilt, and prove him fool.
- 5 Send a fool on thy errand, thou hast a hard journey, and mischief following for thee. Give a fool leave to speak, it is all his legs and no walking. Pay a fool reverence, thou hast wasted one more voice on Mercury's calm. Speech fits as well in a fool's mouth as branch of brutish in the hand of a drunkard. The low words quibble at last, yet silence is the fool, and dead there shall be none.<sup>1</sup> Like a dog at his vomit, the fool goes back over to his own folly.<sup>2</sup> Who is in more perilous case than the fool himself? The man who lays claim to wisdom.
- 6 What, go ahead? says Sloth; there is a lion there; trust me, a lion's den laces in the street. Sloth runs about, but keeps his bed, trust as the door to his kingly. With folded hands the staggered sits by, too idle to put a hand to mouth.<sup>3</sup> What then serves apace is the staggered in his own thought.
- 7 Better pull a dog by the ear than meddle in another's quarrel; pass on in quiet.
- 8 No stone he feels, that deadly hand and arrow cast about him; when he stiles, that hurts is fired by treachery and glads that it was done in jest.
- 9 No flax, no flax; no willow, no quiver. Cool words rather, and a soft under, and settle a quarrel, for their kindling. Innocent enough from the words of the backbiters, yet their poison stings deep into a man's belly.<sup>4</sup> When the heart is wicked, false talk is his house wren.
- 10 The enemy that has treacherous thoughts is betrayed by his friendly talk;<sup>5</sup> trust him not when he speaks thee fair; there are seven depths of wickedness in a single heart. Vain the pretence that cloak his making; before the whole assembly it shall be made known; dig pit, and thou shalt fall into it, shift rock, and it shall roll back on thee. Fit on the glib tongues that have all honey, the treacherous lips that plot men's downfall.

<sup>1</sup> *see. 4-10.* The meaning of all these verses is obvious, and the Hebrew text, perhaps, not above suspicion. In verse 1, the Latin follows a rather far-fetched interpretation given by the Talmud; there is no reference to leaving wisdom in the original. Verse 10 is very variously interpreted; the sense offered by the Latin is perhaps simpler than any other available, but it is not easy to guess what reading it represents in the Hebrew.

<sup>2</sup> *See II Pet. 2.22.*

<sup>3</sup> *see. 13, 14. See 10, 11, 12, 14 above.*

<sup>4</sup> *See 131.*

<sup>5</sup> *In the Hebrew text, "Whomsoever he has said."*

## CHAPTER 27

**D**O not flatter thyself with hopes of tomorrow; what lies in the  
 mouth of the future thou canst not tell.

Seek peace, but not of thy own bargaining; another's lips, not thine, a  
 man trust in.

What is water crudding than stone, more hardenous than sand? <sup>1</sup>  
 A fool's ill humour. Flare, since is rage, and indignation answers like <sup>2</sup>  
 a flood, but the pang of jealousy, there there is no resting.

Better open reproach than the love that gives no sign. Better the <sup>3</sup>  
 love that stings, than hate's false kin.

Full-fed spurns the honeycomb; so Hunger's lips, bitter is soon. <sup>4</sup>

When bird leaves nest, let a man leave his home. <sup>5</sup>

Sweeter than vinegar, sweeter than any perfume, when man's <sup>6</sup>  
 heart talks to heart of friend. Friend of silence, not friend that was thy <sup>7</sup>  
 father's, never forming so, in thy own need, as kinman's door thou  
 shalt need to turn.

Neighbour near the way is better than kinman at a distance.

My son, wouldst thou be thy father's pride? Court wisdom, need is  
 silent thy detractor.

When ill times come, prudence is on its guard, and takes refuge; the <sup>8</sup>  
 usuary march on, and pay the penalty.<sup>9</sup>

Does a man go bail for a stranger? Without sure aid, take his garment is  
 from him; who trusts without knowledge, forfeits the pledge.<sup>10</sup>

So early ahead, so loudly wishing thy neighbour well? This is care, is  
 not blessing.<sup>11</sup>

Between a wall and a roof that drips in winter there is nothing to <sup>12</sup>  
 choose. As well store up the wind in thy house, though thou call her a  
 the marrow of thy right hand.<sup>13</sup>

Iron whets iron, freest shapes friend. <sup>14</sup>

If lips thou wouldst eat, and thy fig-tree with it; honour thou wouldst <sup>15</sup>  
 have, wait well on thy master.

Come as a fast misword is water, the wise see man's heart.<sup>16</sup>

Deaf and the grave were never yet content, nor man's eyes with <sup>17</sup>  
 going.

<sup>1</sup> See 22.3.

<sup>2</sup> See 20.16.

<sup>3</sup> The precise bearing of this proverb remains in doubt.

<sup>4</sup> The whole of this verse is obscure, and the second half of it probably corrupt.

<sup>5</sup> The Hebrew runs mechanically, 'As water thou to him, so honey of man to man,'  
 it is not clear in what sense.

2. Silver and gold are judged by furnace and crucible, man by his repute.<sup>1</sup> (Heart of lover is cross set on mischief, heart of true man on wisdom).
3. Buy a fool like corn, with peace and money, he will be a fool still.
4. Spurn be thy corn, thy sown wasteful, over flock and herd of thine; a riches will slip from thy grasp, and crimes, will they last for ever?<sup>2</sup>
5. See, where the sheaves are laid bare, and the sheafmark is springing, a sheaf lay all carried, now, from the hill-slopes! Penance for the hands that shall clothe thee, for the gains that shall be the price of man's folds: yea, man's milk, too, shall suffice to feed thee, give life and strength to thy race and thy serving-maids.

## CHAPTER 28

**B**AD conscience takes to its heels, with none in pursuit; fearful as a lion the unrepentant heart.

1. Short reigns and many, where a land is plagued for its guile, by wise counsel, and men's talk overheard, long lives the king.
2. Trustiest thieftown and famine when poor men oppress the poor.
3. Sound teaching is forgotten, where the wrong-doer is well spoken of; honest folk will still be up in arms. No skill the knave has to discern a right; guile of the Lord's will makes that craft perfect. Better a poor life lived honestly than crooked ways that bring riches. A son's wisdom is to obey his father's teaching, not to shame him by keeping a crooked company. Wealth that the wretch by extortion amassed, a more generous than he shall have the spending of. Turn a thief out to thy teachers, and thy prayer shall be all wastage. None he brings on himself, that leads the innocent into ill ways, and honest men shall be the brim of him. Wisdom he claims, that wealth has; yet there is many a poor man will put him down.
4. A fair sight it is, to see honest folk rejecting thieves' rule is the people's rule.
5. Never shalt thou thrive by keeping thy bidding; confess it and leave it, if thou wouldst find pardon. Blessed overcomer is the sinuous conscience; it is hardened hearts that fail in their rule.

<sup>1</sup> This common saying should be regarded as a sort of what a man really is, seems suddenly (cp., especially 17.3 above). Some think the Hebrew text means a man should be judged by what he looks in repute, and this would fit in well with the second part of the verse (which is found in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text itself). Others would read, instead of *repute* 'appearance' and this would lead us well to verse 19.

<sup>2</sup> The Latin version here ignores the question, and runs 'for a crown shall be granted for every a sinfulness which yields no good seed in the harvest.'

Man's without bread and prince without scruple, here is revelling a  
line and hungry hear all at once. Let prince lack prudence, everywhere is  
in wrongful oppression; less conscious, he should have lived longer.

Compare thou a man's death, thou mayst flee to the depths of earth, no  
man will shield thee.

Keep the path of innocence, and thou shalt be safe; at once bloom is  
the double-dragon shall fall.

Till field and till belly, idleness shall have a bellyful of nothing is  
but want! Of honesty comes much honour, and how shall wealth is  
reach thee suddenly, yet leave thy hands clean? Great wrong is it to a  
self judgement; wealth; thou hasten much away for a mouthful of  
bread? Dye on his rivals in the race for wealth, a man, true nothing, is  
when want is hard at his heels.

More thanks thou wilt have, in the end, for honest reproof than for a  
deceiving flattery.

Shall he who robe father or mother make light of it? He is sure doom is  
in a man's ear.

Jostling pride it is that rise up equality; trust in the Lord, and thou is  
thou shalt prosper. He is a fool that trusts his own wit; follow the rule of a  
wise man, if thou wouldst reach safety.

Give to the poor, and nothing lack; turn away from their plea, and is  
blessing thou shalt have none.

When heaven frowneth, all the world takes to hiding; come they by a  
their end, thou shalt see honest folk ahead.

## CHAPTER 22

**W**HICH spurns the yoke of correction shall soon sudden doom,  
and put all remedy.

When right thrives, the city is all rejoicing; when there be leaders is  
that rule is, all honest.

Glad the father's heart, when the son takes wisdom for his treasure, is  
not spends on wisdom his patrimony.

Kings by justice or emotion make the fortunes of a state or ruin is  
them.

By empty flattery thou mayst lay a snare for thy friend's feet.

By his own false steps the sinner is entangled; insoberly goes slaying is  
and rejoicing on its way. An eye the upright man has for the friend-  
has none; the sinner is all darkness.

<sup>1</sup> See 12, 15.

1. Richness is a city ruins all; that madness, wisdom must turn aside.  
 2. Alas for the wise man that goes to law with a fool! Between bluster and mockery, there is no end to it.<sup>1</sup>  
 3. He makes monstrous crimes, that lives lawlessly . . . and honest men demand his life!<sup>2</sup>  
 4. Folly turns out its whole mind; wise men restrain silence till by and by.  
 5. King that listens to false rumors has a worthless court. Poor men and their misters dwell side by side, sharing the Lord's sunlight.  
 6. King that gives due orders to the poor has a throne unshakable.  
 7. Wisdom comes of repent, comes of the rock; leave a child to go in own way, and a mother's care is wasted.  
 8. Thrive the godless, there will be wrongs a many; but the just will yet see them put down.  
 9. A man well schooled is not well earned; great joy there shall have of him.  
 10. 'What evil among the host,' the power of prophecy once withdrawn! Happy is he that keeps the law unbroken.  
 11. 'Woe was never yet that would shock a slave; he listens only to defy it.  
 12. Who is in more perilous case than the fool himself? The man who speaks too soon.<sup>3</sup>  
 13. Famine thy slave young, and loved a poor manservant.  
 14. Even the quarrel breeds strife, quick temper is ever at fault.  
 15. Pride will come low; honest waits the humble.  
 16. As thou lovest thy life, old thieves cover; wouldst thou hear appeal made, and keep thy wife counsel?<sup>4</sup>  
 17. Fear of man's judgment will bring thee quickly to ruin; in the world put thy trust, and rise high above them. Sifters a many an earthly prince has for his sway; but it is God that judges all.

<sup>1</sup> The Latin version (strongly misinterpreted by modern editors) gives no indication whether it is the wise man or the fool who blusters and laughs; the latter is evidently meant.

<sup>2</sup> 'Demand his life' according to Hebrew usage, can only mean 'demand that he should be put to death.' It seems clear, therefore, that our present text is either faulty or defective.

<sup>3</sup> The maxim Hebrew text has rendered by 'wast' occurs in the same which makes it probable that the version of Moses on Mount Sinai is here referred to. Otherwise, it is hard to establish any connection between the two halves of the verse.

<sup>4</sup> The sense of this verse is exactly the same as that of xl. 10 above; but here (perhaps through an error) our present Latin text gives 'folly' instead of 'fool,' and obscures the evident meaning of the original.

<sup>5</sup> See Lam. 3:4.



Eyesore alike, the sinner to honest men, the plain-dresser to villain. 18  
(Let the son heed a father's warnings, he shall fear no man).<sup>1</sup>

# CHAPTER 30

**H**ERE are the words of Agur, son of Jaci.<sup>2</sup> Here is revelation made known by one that had God with him, God's near presence to comfort him, as he spoke.

What though I be ignorant, beyond human woe? What though the knowledge of man has passed me by, wisdom's skill grasp'd, without skill in holy lore? Who may he be that has scaled heaven, and come back to tell its secrets; hold the winds in the hollow of his hand, wringed away the steam-clouds under his mantle, laid the bounds of earth? Tell me his name; will not, if thou canst, where son of his may be found?<sup>3</sup>

All God's promises are like moral manna in the dew; he is the sure defence of all who trust in him. Add to his word no word of thine; a speedily thy promises shall come to light.

Two requests I would make of thee; be they mine while life lasts. Keep my thoughts ever far from vanity and lying; and for my state of life, be neither poverty mine nor riches. Grant me only the livelihood I need, so shall not abundance tempt me to shew thee, and boast: if Lord thou be, nor want wilt thou cost, and dishonour my God's name with perjury.

Never accuse a slave to his master; curse thou be away, and to thy undoing.

A bad heart it is, that cause their fathers and for their mothers 11  
have no good word. A bad heart, that owns no blot, yet is all unpurged 12  
born its delinquency. A bad heart, all haughty looks and scornful brow. 13  
A bad heart, that has teeth sharp as swords, just that grind slowly 14  
on, till poor folk none are left, their friendless neighbours.

Two silences there are, men say, hush of the leech, that still cry, 15  
Give us more, give us more! But say, there is a third lamentable; nay, 16  
a fourth I can name that never says, Enough! The grave, and the 17  
harrow weeds, and earth that walks up the side, and fire, did fire ever 18  
say, Enough?

<sup>1</sup> The bracketed words occur neither in the Hebrew text nor in the Septuagint Greek.

<sup>2</sup> The Latin version here translates the two proper names, Agur and Jaci as He who governs and He who reveals. The latter part of the verse is wholly obscure, and is generally thought to include more proper names, Ishid, and that. It is not clear whether Agur's prophesy forms a part or the whole of this chapter. <sup>3</sup> See Ps. 139.31.

- 17 Proud looks, that tell of a father mocked, a mother's right despised  
 That eye the vulture shall pick out on the hill-side, the vulture's beak  
 shall prey on it.
- 18 Three mysteries there are too high for me, and a fourth is beyond  
 my ken: eagle that flies in air, viper that crawls on rock, ship that  
 seeks the sea, and man that goes seeking wisdom.<sup>1</sup> How long I marvel  
 at woman with that lick her greedy lips, and will have it that she did  
 no harm.
- 19 Three sights there are set earth trembling, and a fourth is cause  
 to quake; slave turned king, chafed bull fed, a wood married, and a maid  
 that supplants her mistress.
- 20 Of four little things in nature, wise men cannot match the skill.  
 21 How puny a race the ants, that hoard their food in harvest time; how  
 defenceless the rock-rabbits, that hide their burrows in the cliff  
 22 His palace have the locusts, yet ever they guard its entry: the lizard  
 climbs high, and rushes to home in the palace of kings.
- 23 Three creatures there are that walk consistently, and a fourth goes  
 so proudly on his way: forest of beasts, the lion, that fears no companion.  
 24 The cock, (clucking they call him),<sup>2</sup> and the man; and the king, too,  
 for who can say him nay?
- 25 Fool that thrusts himself forward will prove a fool;<sup>3</sup> he had been better  
 26 stirred to hold his tongue. First smite, then smite them mayst have  
 for the wringing blow thy nose lacerate, and blood shall flow at last;  
 how then canst thou prove thy quarrel home, and no strife come of it?

## CHAPTER 31

**H**ERE are words of King Lemuel; here is revealed his mother  
 made known to him for his instruction.

- What word have I for my son, the child of my own womb, the ful-  
 1 filment of my prospect? Wouldst thou give thyself up to the love of  
 2 women, spend thy all on a king's undoing? What was never made for  
 3 kings, Lemuel, never for kings; curst be he in thy council-chamber.

<sup>1</sup> This fourth mystery is given in the Hebrew text as 'the way of a man with a maid'; the Latin version, evidently in the same sense, has 'the way of a man in his marriage.'

<sup>2</sup> Literally, according to the Latin, 'chicken from,' but the other sense of the Hebrew word is clearly more appropriate.

<sup>3</sup> The second masculine form is given in the Hebrew text simply as 'the girl of folly,' and cannot be certainly identified. The personified, or some other creature with a thin waist, seems more likely than the cock.

<sup>4</sup> 'Thrusts himself forward' appears to be the sense of the Hebrew verb here, which is rendered in the Latin 'move with advancement.'

Not for them to drink deep, and forget the claims of right, and mis-  
judge the plea of the friendless. Strong drink for the mourner, wine  
for the afflicted heart; deep let them drink, and forget their need,  
and think of their misery no more. Do thou, meanwhile, give thy  
voice for dumb pleader and for doomed prisoner; ever let that voice  
of thine pronounce true sentences, giving relief to the friendless  
and the poor.

A man who has found a vigorous wife has found a rare treasure, is  
brought from distant shores. Bound to her in loving confidence, he  
will have no need of spoil. Content, not sorrow, she will bring him as  
as long as life lasts. Does she not busy herself with wool and thread, is  
plying her hands with ready skill? Ever she stores her house like a  
some merchant ship, bringing provision from far away. From early  
dawn she is up, assigning food to the household, so that each waiting-  
woman has her share. Ground must be cultivated, and sown, and is  
planted out as a vineyard, with the earnings of her toil. How busily  
she girds herself to the task, how restless are her arms! Industry, she  
knows, is well rewarded, and all night long her lamp does not go out.  
Jealously she sets her hands to work, her fingers clutch the spindle.  
Kindly is her welcome to the poor, her purse ever open to those in  
need. Let the snow lie cold if it will, she has no fear for her household; is  
no servant of hers but is warmly clad. Made by her own hands was  
the coverlet on her bed, the clothes of linen and purple that she wears.  
Name is honoured as the city goes as that husband of hers, when he  
sits in council with the elders of the land. Often she will sell linen  
of her own weaving, or make a gain for the travelling merchant to  
buy. Protected by her own industry and good repute, she grows the  
more with a smile. Ripe wisdom governs her speech, but it is kindly as  
instruction she gives. She keeps watch over all that goes on in her  
house, not content to go through life eating and sleeping. That is  
why her children are the first to call her blessed, her husband is loud  
in her praise: Untroubled art thou among all the women that have  
enriched their homes. This are the winning ways, beauty is a name;  
it is the woman who fears the Lord that will achieve renown. Work  
as such as hers claims its reward; let her life be spoken of with praise  
at the city gates.

## THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

### CHAPTER I

**WORDS** of the Spokesman,<sup>1</sup> King David's son, that reigned once at Jerusalem.

1 A shadow's shadow, he tells us, a shadow's shadow; a world of  
2 shadowed! How is man the better for all this toiling of his, here under  
3 the sun? Age succeeds age, and the world goes on unaltered. Sun  
4 may rise and sun may set, but ever it goes back and is reborn. Round  
5 as the south it moves, round to the north it turns; the wheel, too,  
6 though it makes the round of the world, goes back to the beginning  
7 of its round at last. All the rivers flow into the sea, yet never the sea  
8 grows full; back to their springs they find their way, and never be  
9 flowing still. Wanderers, all wanderers, who shall tell the tale? Life  
10 looks on unmarked; ear hears, ill content. Ever that shall be that  
11 ever has been, that which has happened once shall happen again;  
12 there can be nothing new, here under the sun. Never man calls a  
13 thing new, but it is something already known to the ages that went  
14 before us: only we have no record of older days. So, believe me,  
15 the fate of to-morrow's doings will be forgotten by the men of a  
16 later time.

17 I was a king in my day, I, the Spokesman; I ruled my nation,  
18 Jerusalem my capital. And it was my resolve to search deep and  
19 find out the meaning of all that men do, here under the sun; all that  
20 came of busy toil which God has given to the sons of Adam for their  
21 work. All that men do beneath the sun I marked, and found it was  
22 but frustration and lost labour, all of it: there was no lasting man's  
23 cross-gained nature, no reckoning up their follies.

24 I at least (so I thought myself) have risen above the rest; a king  
25 so wise never reigned at Jerusalem; here is a mind has reflected much,  
26 and much learned. And therewith I applied my mind to a new study:  
27 what means wisdom and learning, what means ignorance and folly?  
28 And I found that this too was labour lost; much wisdom, much  
29 wit; who adds to learning, adds to the load we bear.

<sup>1</sup> The word Ecclesiastes, like the Hebrew word it renders, should mean one who instructs an assembly, or addresses it, or both.

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text here seems to imply that King Solomon was wiser than anyone who had reigned before him at Jerusalem, whereas David was to be his only (Jerusalem) predecessor. Now we need not attach too much importance to a conventional turn of phrase; cf. III. Eg. 14. 9.

## CHAPTER 2

NEXT, I thought to give the rein to my desires, and enjoy pleasure, until I found that this, too, was labour lost. Wouldn't you know how I learned to find laughter an empty thing, and all joy a vain illusion; how I resolved at last to deny myself the comfort of wine, wisdom now all my quest, folly disowned? For I could not rest until I knew where man's true good lay, what was his life's true task, here under the sun.<sup>1</sup> Great plans I set on foot; I would build palaces, I would plant vineyards, I would have park and orchard, planted with every kind of tree; and to water all this greenery there must be pools of water besides. Men-slaves I bought and women-slaves, till I had a great retinue of them; herds, too, and abundance of flocks, such as Jerusalem never saw till then. Gold and silver I amassed, revenues of subject king and subject provinces; men-singers I had and women-singers, and all that man delights in, because a man, and just of mine to fill them.<sup>2</sup> Never had Jerusalem known such wealth; yet in the midst of it, wisdom never left my side. Eyes denied nothing that an eye could see, a heart denied nothing that an enjoyment, free of all the pleasures I had devised for myself, this was to be my reward, this the fruit of all my labour. And now, when I looked round as all I had in done, all that ungodly draggery, nothing I found there but frustration and labour lost, as fugitive is all we cherish, here under the sun.

Then my mind went back to the thought of wisdom, of ignorance, of sin, and folly. What thoughts I, should mortal king strive to imitate the sovereign power that made him?<sup>3</sup> I saw, indeed, that wisdom differed from folly as light from darkness; the wise man had eyes in his head, while the fool went his way headlong; but the cooking of them? In their ending both were alike. Why then (I said to myself), if fool and I must come to the same end at last, why can I the fool, that toiled to achieve wisdom more than he? So my thoughts ran, and

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, the first part of this verse refers not to the world through which revealed the author to a simpler way of living, but to those first thoughts of which he afterwards repeated: "I considered how best to purify my body with wine, how best to cling to my follies, yet retaining wisdom at the centre."

<sup>2</sup> The last ten words of this verse represent, in the Hebrew text, a passage of uncertain significance.

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew text, in the latter half of this verse, runs: "For what shall the man (like that comes after the king) Why, what they have already done", perhaps a reference recalling the folly of King Solomon (see verse 10 below). The literal sense of the Latin is: "What (said I) is man, that he should be able to follow the King, his Maker?"

- a I stand before you, here too. Endlessly forgotten, who man and  
 fool alike, since to-morrow's morning will be no longer than yester-  
 day's will man and fool alike doomed to death.
- b Thus I became weary of life itself, so worthless it seemed to me,  
 all that man does beneath the sun, frustration all of it, and labour  
 without. And I, beneath that same sun, what dead labours I had spent! I  
 hated the thought of those men, should their of mine seemed to  
 whom? An heir, would he be mine man or fool? How could tell, but  
 his would be the possession of all I had toiled for so hard, achieved  
 so far so anxiously; could there be frustration worse than this? I would  
 a hold my hand; no more should yonder man see *labours of mine*. What  
 should one man go on toiling, his the craft, his the skill, his the anxious  
 care, leaving all to another, and an idiot? That were frustration surely,  
 and great mischief done.
- c Tell me, how is a man the richer for all that toil of his, all that loss  
 a labour of his, here under the sun? His days all painfulness and care,  
 with very nights restless; what is here but frustration? Were it not  
 better to eat and drink, and roll only at his own pleasure? These,  
 so too, come from God's hand, and who has better right to food tasted  
 and pleasure enjoyed than I? Who wins God's favour, his wisdom  
 and skill for his reward, and pleasure too; is it the slaver that is doomed  
 to hardship and to shameful toil, boarding and scraping, and all to  
 satisfy some lord God loves best? For him frustration, for him the  
 labour lost.

## CHAPTER 3

- E**VERYTHING must be done by turns, no activity, here beneath the  
 sun, forever, but has its allotted time for beginning and coming to an end.  
 • Men are here only to die, plant trees only to displace them. Now we  
 make life, now we save it, now we are destroying, now building.  
 • Weep first, then laugh, mourn we and dance; the stones we have  
 scattered we must bring together now; count we first and then shut  
 the entrance. To-day's gain, to-morrow's loss; what comes measured,  
 is soon thrown away; the garment rent, the garment mended; riches  
 elapsing, and silence reached; love alternating with hatred, war with  
 • peace. For all this toiling of his, how is man the richer? Futility.

<sup>1</sup> i.e., first. These verses are uniformly understood as implying that man's varied activities have to be carried on at a time of God's, not of his own, choosing. But, if so, the imagery are strangely chosen, for it is even clear why a series of contrasts should have been instituted at all. The contrast suggests (at especially verse 2) that we are meant to think of life as a continuous alternation of opposite activities; in that case, the passage has the quite *other* side of frustration, at any point.

indeed I found it, this mark God has given to mankind: and he, meanwhile, has made the world, in all its admirable beauty, and given to the contemplation<sup>1</sup> of it, yet of his own doings with us, first and last, never should men gain comprehension. To enjoy his life, to make it the best of it, beyond doubt this is man's highest employment: that is gift at least God has granted him, to eat and drink and see his toil rewarded. But be sure all God has made will remain for ever as he made it; there is no adding to it, no taking away from it; so he will command our reverence. Nothing that has been, but lasts on still, is nothing that will be, but has been already; he is ever repeating the history of the past.

I marked, too, how wrong was done instead of right, injustice is instead of justice, there under the sun's eye; and I told myself that if God would give judgment one day between the just and the sinners, and all things would reach their appointed end then.<sup>2</sup> I told myself is that God's purpose with the sons of men was to test them . . .

. . . And that they might see they were only like the beasts . . .<sup>3</sup> After it all, man comes to the same ending as the beasts; there is nothing to choose between his lot and theirs, both alike are doomed to die. They are but a breath, all of them; what has man that the beasts have not? Frustration everywhere: we are all making for the same goal; of us earth was made, and to earth we must return. Who has a sight is to tell us that the spirit of man mounts upwards, and the spirit of a beast sinks down to the depth? So I became aware that it is best for man to busy himself here to his own content; this and nothing else is his allotted portion; who can show him what the future will bring?

## CHAPTER 4

AND then my thoughts would turn back to all the wrongs that are done under the sun's eye. Injustice folk in power, and who is to comfort them? Who is to comfort them, powerless against their opposi-

<sup>1</sup> Literally 'the discourse'. The Hebrew text gives a more mysterious phrase: 'He has set eternity (or perhaps, the world) in their hearts.'

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text has 'For there is a time for every purpose and for every deed thereof'; it is not clear in what sense.

<sup>3</sup> The end of this verse, in the Hebrew text, is commonly supposed of corruption. But it seems doubtful whether there has not been some wider distortion: the want of logical connexion between the two halves of this verse is remarkable. Those scholars who would strike out verse 13 as an insertion do not seem aware; it leaves a logical gap between the thought of verse 12 and that of verse 14.

2400? The dead, it seemed, were more to be envied than the living; better yet to be still unborn, never to have known the shameful deeds that are done, not here in the sunlight.

2401 I thought, too, of human toil and striving; how much it owed to man's rivalry with his fellows! All was frustration and lost labour here. What wonder if the fool ate till, and starved to death? Better a handful (says he) quietly come by, than a whole world that is all striving and labour lost.<sup>1</sup>

2402 And there was another kind of frustration I marked, here under the sun. Here is one that works alone, partner nor son nor brother to aid him, yet still works on, never content with his bright toil, never asking, as he toils and spins himself, who shall gain by it. Frustration and lost labour, here too.

2403 Better to be in partnership with another, than alone; partnership belongs advantage to both. If one fails, the other will give support; with the lonely it goes hard, when he fails, there is none to raise him. Sleep two in one bed, each shall warm the other; for the lonely, there is no warmth. Two may withstand assault, where one is no match for it; a triple cord is not lightly broken.

2404 There is more hope for a wise servant<sup>2</sup> that is in hard straits, than for a doomed king that forthright has none. Men have risen to a throne that till now were bound in prison; men born to rule a kingdom have died of want. I have seen the whole world, from east to west, take part with the young man, the temper that rises in the old king's stead.

2405 The old king, that had an immortal line of ancestors<sup>3</sup> and now poverty shall take no pride in him! All is frustration, and labour lost.

2406 Look well what they are doing when they guest into God's house; present thyself there in a spirit of obedience. Obedience is far better than the sacrifice made by fools, that are guilty of casting sacrifices.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Eccl. 4. 4:* It is the Latin version, not the Hebrew text, that puts verse 4 into the mouth of the fool. Some think that verse 3 is implied here, and belongs to another context.

<sup>2</sup> Or perhaps 'boy'.

<sup>3</sup> 'The old king, that had an immortal line of ancestors': literally, 'The number of the people of those who were before him is infinite'. The Hebrew text has, 'The number of the people who followed his leadership was infinite', referring evidently to the ancestors; the Latin gives a better sense. The language of the whole passage is confused, and perhaps in part corrupt; there is no reason to think that any particular historical situation is referred to.

<sup>4</sup> The allusion is perhaps to the first instance to ceremonial defilement, such as might disqualify the worshipper from bringing his offering until he had been purified. But evidently it may be interpreted of moral disqualification; cf. *ibid.* 5. 49.



## CHAPTER 5

WHEN thou standest in God's presence, do not pour out with rash  
 tongue all that is in thy heart. God sees as heaven sees, thou as earth;  
 few words are best. *Sure* is dreams come from an overweighed brain,  
 from glib utterance comes ill-considered speech. Vow to God if  
 thou earnest, without delay perform it; he will have no light and rash  
 promises; now made must be now paid. For better undertake  
 nothing than undertake what thou dost not fulfil. Wouldest thou  
 defile thy whole nature through the tongue's fault? Wouldest thou  
 find thyself saying, with God's angel to hear thee, No thought I  
 gave to it? Little wonder if God disappoints every ambition of the  
 man who speaks so. Dreams, empty dreams, led to those glib  
 promises of false; content thyself rather with the fear of God.<sup>1</sup>

Then arise, it may be, in this promise or that, oppression of the  
 poor, false sword given, and wrong unredeemed? Let not such things  
 trouble thee; trust me, authority is watched by higher authority,  
 subject in turn to higher authority yet; and, above them all, the  
 King of the whole earth rules the wide spaces of it.<sup>2</sup> What is his  
 decree? Why, that covetousness should never fill its own maw; never  
 did he that loved money taste the enjoyment of his money;<sup>3</sup> here is  
 illustration once again. Richer if thou grow, richer will give thee  
 more mouths to feed; profit he has none that owns them, save the  
 staring of his eyes on them if he will. Full belly or empty, sound is  
 the owner's sleep; sleep, to the purged body of the rich still denied.

Another evil I have found past remedy, here under the sun; riches is  
 that a man hands to his own undoing. By cruel misdeeds they are  
 set out to him, and to the sin he has begotten nothing he leaves but  
 poverty. Maled he come, when he left his mother's womb, and so

<sup>1</sup> *vs. 3* 'No thought I gave to it' literally, 'There is no thought'. A comparison with the Hebrew text makes it clear that there is no question of denying God's Providence.

<sup>2</sup> *vs. 2-4* It is perhaps best to understand the whole of this passage as referring to such vows. In that case, the words in verse 1, 'God is in heaven, and thou art on earth', will not be a mere assertion of the divine dignity, but a reminder that God knows better than we ourselves, what is best for us.

<sup>3</sup> There can be little doubt that the old Greek translators were right in interpreting the Latin as a reference to divine, not to earthly, happiness. The meaning of the Hebrew text is quite uncertain.

<sup>4</sup> In the original, this verse begins simply, 'The covetous man will never have his fill of money'; the rendering given above assumes that there is a tacit comparison between this verse and what went before.

asked still death find him; nothing to show for all his long endeavour.  
 11 Alas, what ailed him, that he should go away so richer than he came?  
 12 Nothing left of all those sorted labours of his: all his life long the  
 cheerless beard, the unobtrusive cares, the concern, the melan-  
 13 choly! Better far, by my say of it, that a man should eat and drink  
 and enjoy the revivings of his own labour, here under the sun, as long  
 14 as God gives him life; what more can he claim? God's gift it is, if  
 a man has wealth and goods and freedom to enjoy them, making what  
 15 he comes to him and profiting by what he has earned. Few be his days  
 or many, he regards little, so long as God gives his heart content.

## CHAPTER 4

16 **W**ITH another hardship I have seen men visited here beneath the  
 sun, and commonly. God gives a man wealth, and goods, and  
 more, till there is nothing more left for his appetite to desire; and then  
 God denies him the enjoyment of all this, throws the sorted moralities  
 17 stranger inward; here is frustration, here is cold comfort indeed. Ay,  
 let a man have a hundred children to his name, yea, let him have a  
 many, and he never his end; yea, if he is not to enjoy the revenues of  
 his land still, and lay his bones in it,<sup>1</sup> I say it were better for him never  
 18 to have come to this birth. Well made, the empty passage from light  
 to darkness, well lost, the chance of earthly renown, if only a man  
 never sees the sun, never learns the meaning of good fortune and ill.  
 19 Though he should have lived two thousand years, he were none the  
 better for it, if he might not continue in the enjoyment of his goods.  
 Do we not all reach the same goal at last?<sup>2</sup>  
 20 What is all our striving, but a full mouth and an empty belly? Is  
 what men meet to be envied thus lost? Where should a man go when  
 he is poor, save where he can find a livelihood?<sup>3</sup>  
 21 Better also at what lies in view than hanker after dreams. But indeed  
 all is frustration, and labour lost.  
 22 He is known already by name, that is still unborn; and this at best

<sup>1</sup> *ec. 1:11* It is not clear how this situation differs from that described in *g. 1:12-13* unless perhaps the difference is between satisfaction of a man's riches, and those material loss.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'and hath travail', but it is difficult to believe that the author of these chapters would regard the lack of funeral rites as a significant misfortune.

<sup>3</sup> The second half of this verse, in the Latin, is literally: 'And what advantage hath the poor man, save to go where there is life?' The issue raising has perhaps been lost, the Hebrew text, 'What (hath) the poor man who has knowledge to walk in the presence of the living?' yields no satisfactory sense.

is known of him, that he is but man, and cannot plead his name, matched against too strong an adversary.

Words, they be spun endlessly; yet what should be at the heart of a ear reasoning, but frustration?

## CHAPTER 7

**WHAT** need for man to ask questions that are beyond his scope? There is no knowing how best his life should be spent, this brief pilgrimage that passes like a shadow, and is gone. And what will befall after his death, in this world beneath the sun, who can tell?

There is no embalming like a good name left behind; man's true birthday is the day of his death.

Enter a visit paid where men mourn, then where they feast; it will be put then in mind of the end that awaits us all, admirable the living with the foreknowledge of death. Frowns are then smile; the downcast can look between a chastened heart. Home of sadness, home of gladness; heart of the wise mind, heart of the foolish.

Enter receive a wise man's rebuke, then hear thy praises sung by a fool. Loud but not long the thorns crackle under the pot, and a fool's make merry; for there, too, frustration.

Opposition bewilders even a wise man's wit, and undermines his courage.

Speech may end fair, that fool began; patience is better than a movement. Never be quick to take offence; it is a fool's heart that harbours grudges.

Never ask why the old times were better than start a fool's question.

Great worth has wisdom matched with good endowment; there is advantage it shall bring thee than all the rest, here under the sun. Wealth befriends whom wisdom befriends; better still, who learns wisdom wins life.

Mark well God's doings; where he looks advance, none may set the crooked straight.

Come good times, accept the good they bring; come evil, let them never take thee awestruck; bethink thee, that God has balanced thee against thine, and will have no man rejoice over his lot.

In my days of belted enquiry, I have seen pious men reined for as all their piety, and evil-doers live long in all their wickedness. Why is thus, do not set too much store by piety, nor play the wise man to know, if thou wouldst not be bewildered over thy lot. Yet plunge is not deep in evil-doing; fully achieve, else thou shalt perish before

- 11 the time. To play thou must needs die; yet live by that other  
creation too; fear God, and thou hast left no duty unfulfilled.<sup>1</sup>
- 12 Wisdom is a wiser ally than ten city magistrates; there is no man  
on earth so exact over his duties that he does over the right, never  
commits a fault.
- 13 The chance words men utter, heed but little, how if thou shouldest  
hear thy own servant speaking ill of thee? The own conscience will  
tell thee how often thou too hast spoken ill of other men.
- 14 Thus, by the testimony of my wisdom, I would not all  
things; Wisdom, cried I, I must have; yet all the while she withdrew  
15 from me, farther away than ever. Deep, deep is her secret; who shall  
read it?
- 16 Here is a mind that has passed the whole world of things in review,  
examining everything, weighing everything, so as to have a wise  
estimation of them, eager to understand the fool's foolishnesses,  
17 the false calculations of rich men. And this I have ascertained;  
death itself is not so cruel as woman's heart that wheedles and beguiles,  
as woman's smiles that release their captive never. God's friends  
18 escape her, of slavers she makes an easy prey. I weighed this against  
that (he, the Spokesman, tells us), and the sum of my enquiry was  
19 this. One thing I ever longed to find, and found never, a true woman.  
One true man I might find among a thousand, but a woman never.
- 20 Of this, beyond all else, I have satisfied myself; man's nature was  
simple enough when God made him, and these endless questions are  
of his own devising.
- 21 The wise man, there is none like him. O for one who should read  
the riddle!

## CHAPTER 9

- WHEN** a man is given wisdom, it shines out in his face; the  
stamp of Omnipotence is on his brow.
- 2 Mine to do a king's bidding, to hold fast by an oath taken in the  
name of God. Do not break away from his presence, or rebelliously  
3 withstand him; he can do all he will, with such authority his word  
4 runs; none may call his acts in question. Do as thou art bidden,  
and fear no harm. A time will come, the wise man knows, when he

<sup>1</sup> *vs. 11-12* The author here appears to recommend taking a middle course between excessive play and excessive thinking. Some think this was part of his literature speculations (from 1:8) others, that the 'wisdom' which can be trusted is consciousness about our fellow men, or scrupulous observance of moralised detail.

shall win a blessing; time befalls every man his chance, be his business what it may, only this curse lies upon man, that he cannot learn from the past, cannot get woe of the future.<sup>1</sup>

The wicked man may not hold in check; the day of his death he cannot determine; nor ever does war give release from service, nor a sin discharge us to the sinners.

This, too, I have marked, as I gave heed to all that befalls us, here beneath the sun. There are times when man rules over man to his undoing.<sup>2</sup> I have seen godless men get peacefully to the grave, that had lived their lives out in baseness of holiness, and won the name of good men from their fellow citizens; here, too, is frustration.<sup>3</sup> Because sentence is not pronounced upon the evil-doers without more ado, men are emboldened to live sinfully. And yet, though a the sincerest persons on the Divine patience that has been with a hundred misdeeds, I know well enough that blessings are for those who fear God, who fear his vengeance. None a blessing for sinners; never be it said they lived out their full span of days! Backlash of God's vengeance, see, they pass like a shadow, and are gone!

Another kind of frustration, too, earth tests, there are upright men that are plagued as though they lived the life through fire, just as there are sinners who take no more harm than if they could pluck innocence; I say this is frustration indeed.

For me, then, mirth! No higher blessing could man attain, here or under the sun, than to eat and drink and make merry; nothing else had he to show for all those labours of his, for all that life-time God has given him, here under the sun.

Should I enudge my wits to grow wise, and know the meaning of all in earth's make; be like the man that allow their eyes no sleep, day or night? Nay, I understood too well that God's dealings with man, as here under the sun, are past all accounting for; the more a man labours to read that riddle, the less he finds out, and he loses of all, that boasts himself wise in the reading of it.

<sup>1</sup> *ec.* 1:12. It is not clear whether we are concerned, in this passage, with an earthly king or a heavenly.

<sup>2</sup> The wording's according to the Latin, the rule's what more probably, in the original, the reference was to that of the subject.

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew text here is obscure, and the Latin differs from it in some points.

## CHAPTER 9

- ALL this, too, I pondered in my heart, and would spare no pains to find out the meaning of it. Here are upright men and wise; and it is a drudge's task they do; all in God's keeping, and yet men have no means of telling whether they have earned his love, or his displeasure. This remains as yet uncertain, and meanwhile all have the same lot, upright and godless, good and wicked, clean and unclean alike. Whichever they afflict or bring to they come, well did they or ill, true more they or false, it is all one. Of all that goes on here, here under the sun, nothing does more hurt than this equality of fortunes, what wonder if men's hearts, while yet they live, are full of malice and defiance? And so they journey on to the grave. Were but immortality the price that we, here of this is none; living long is better off than dead alive. They live under sentence of death; and when death comes, of nothing will they be aware any longer; no reward can they receive, now that every trace of them has vanished away; no love, no hatred, no envy can they feel; they have said good-bye to this world, and to all its busy doings, here under the sun.
- Go thy ways, then, eat thy bread with a sweet heart, and drink wine to thy heartening; that done, God will no more of thee. Ever be thy garments of white, ever let thy brow gleam with oil. Live as one with the wife that is thy heart's love, long as this carcass of life is granted thee; fugitive days, here beneath the sun. Live thou and labour thou under the sun as thou wilt, this thy portion shall be, and nothing more. Whatever lies in thy power, do while do it thou canst; there will be no doing, no scheming, no wisdom as still left to thee in the grave, that none shall be thy home.
- Then my thoughts took a fresh turn: man's art does not avail, here beneath the sun, to win the race for the swift, or the battle for the strong, a livelihood for wisdom, riches for great learning, or for the countless deeds; chance and the moment rule all. Nor does man see his end: springs bottled fish or caged bird is not overtaken so suddenly as man is, when the day of doom falls on him unawares.
- And here, too, is wise warning, man's wit, as I judge it. There was a small city once, with few men to hold it; and there was a great king that marched out against it, raised a mound and ringed it with siege-works, till it was beleaguered on every side. To such a city, how came relief? By the wise counsel of one poor man that had his wit about him. And was there anyone, think you, that remembered the

poor man afterwards? Not one. Sure enough, said I, wisdom has the honour of rulers; but see how the poor man's wisdom goes for nothing, and no one listens to him now!

A wise man's whisper carries farther than great outcry from a king or of fools. *Arise, cannot march wisdom; by one ship,<sup>1</sup> what great adventures is lost*

## CHAPTER 10

**N**O ointment can perfume brew as sweet, but it grows foul when dead flies are lodged in it. And wouldst thou banish away wisdom and honour both, for a moment's folly?

The fool's wife set astray; the wise man's right is to his left.<sup>2</sup> By his life way of it, every passer-by on the road is a fool, save he.

Though a prince's anger should mount against thee, do not desert thy post; great harm by thy hailing reach may yet be assuaged.

This is a source of trouble I have marked, here under the sun; the careless whims of tyrants.

Fools come to the top, down go rich and riches; slaves you will see riding on horseback, and princes going about in their bridle-reins.

Fall into pit thou shalt not, if thou dig none; breach no walls, if a thorn wouldst avoid the adder's sting. Stone smashes his foot that's stone-carrier, and wood scatches him that wood cuts.

Blame: fool that has grown dull from long disease shall not that he pains a currier<sup>3</sup> if thou hadst been wise sooner, thou shouldst have told him.<sup>4</sup> His snake ere the spell begins, he is no better off than is his the master-wind.<sup>5</sup>

Wise utterance wins favour; the fool that opens his mouth does but ruin himself, his preface kills talk, his conclusion weakens. Of it words a fool has no wit . . .

<sup>1</sup> The rendering 'one ship' is here less appropriate; the verb used, in the Latin as in the Hebrew, has the root meaning of 'making a voyage'.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'The wise man's heart is towards the right, the fool's towards the left'.

<sup>3</sup> The Latin version obscures the sense of the proverb by adding 'in sharpening it'—the sense is rather 'to cure it'.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'My wisdom follows thee striving'; The Hebrew text, which is perhaps corrupt, gives the same reading, 'wisdom is a useful guide'.

<sup>5</sup> This seems the best interpretation of the Hebrew text, which runs, literally, 'The corner of the serpent has no advantage'. Cf. Ps. cv. 4. The Latin rendering here, 'He went off in to who backbiten in secret', admits an appropriate sense.

... What went before, is lost to man's view, and what shall befall when he is gone, none can tell him.<sup>1</sup>

- 11 He is on a boat's strand, that does not even know his way to town.<sup>2</sup>  
 12 War to the land that has young blood on the throne, whose court  
 13 sits frowning till daybreak! And happy the land whose king is of true  
 14 princely breed, whose courtiers feast when feast should be, to comfort  
 15 their hearts, not all in rivalry.  
 16 Food will cheer them, wine bring them gladness, but money, it  
 17 answers every need.  
 18 Of the king, no treasonable thoughts, of the nobles, no ill word  
 19 even in thy bed-chamber; the very birds in heaven will catch the  
 20 scheme of it, and fly off to betray thy secret.

## CHAPTER II

- 1 **H**ERE, on the sunset's bosom, venture thy livelihood; wait long  
 2 there mayer, but be sure thou shalt recover it at last. Seven claims  
 3 thou hast satisfied, do not refuse the eighth. Not time to fashion what  
 4 general calamities the future holds in store; when the rain comes,  
 5 whence the clouds gather, north or south as the tree falls, north or  
 6 south the trunk will lie. Still waiting for a wind? Never shall thy  
 7 seed be sown. Still watching the clouds? Never shall thy harvest be  
 8 carried. What guides the wind's course, how man's frame is  
 9 fashioned in the womb, thou canst not tell; and thinkst thou to  
 10 understand God's delays, that is Maker of all? Early abroad, to sow  
 11 thy seed, and let evening find thee still at work; which sowing shall  
 12 speed bring, none knows, or whether both shall strive to thy profit.<sup>3</sup>  
 13 Ay, it is good to look upon, the light of day; never was eye yet but  
 14 loved to see the sun. Only be thy years never so many, never so  
 15 happy, do not forget the dark days that are coming, the long days, when  
 16 frustration will be the end of it all. While thou art young, take thy  
 17 fill of manhood's pride, let thy heart beat high with youth, follow  
 18 where thought leads and inclination beckons, but remember that for

<sup>1</sup> It seems probable that there has been some distortion of the text here. The latter part of the verse is practically a repetition of 1, 1.

<sup>2</sup> The exact meaning of this proverb can no longer be identified.

<sup>3</sup> *See, 1:10.* These verses evidently teach that action is worth while, in spite of all the pessimistic considerations hitherto adduced. But commentators are not agreed whether they refer expressly to charitable actions (*cf. Lk. 15, 26*), or (as here) to the free (unpaid) or commercial ventures, or to action in general.



all this God will call thee to account. Did thy heart, then, at rest?—as men, thy nature of it however; youth and pleasure, they are so quickly gone!

## CHAPTER 12

**D**O not forget thy Maker, now, while youth lasts; now, while the cold days are still far off, the years that pass unperceived. Nor yet the obscuration of sun and moon and sunlight; and the clouds that will gather when the rainy season is done. One day, paley will shake those door-keepers, those stalwart guards will be bowed with age, wear, now, the busy maidens at the mill, dancers, now, these bright glances from the windows. The wren-chirps that, muffled the heart of the mill, bird-song for wakening, and all these tones of music! Fear open every height, terror on the rock; almond-blossom munched for whiteness; the grasshopper's weight; a burden now; the splendid flood escaped! Man is far his overhanging home, and already the mourners are with in the stream. That, or the ponder cord of silver will be loosed, yonder golden chain unravelled; pitcher broken beside the fountain, wheel lost in the well! With that, back goes dust to its parent earth, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

A shadow's shadow, he, the Spokesman, tells us, a world of shadow! Alas! the wisdom the Spokesman had, to be the nurse of his people; the story of his life he made known to them, laid secrets bare, and proverbs framed a many. Sayings of much import he devised, and so nothing his pen set down but was truth unalloyed. Sharp guards they are to sting us, sharp nails driven deep home, these who words left to us by many masters, but all echoing one shepherd's voice. Let them, my son, be all the wisdom thou canst; this writing of books is no endless merriment, and from overmuch study comes sickness.

Conclude we then thus in general; Fear God, and keep his commandments; this is the whole meaning of man. No one of these but God will bring it under his scrutiny, deep beyond all thy knowing, and pronounce it good or evil.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, "Anglophers".

<sup>2</sup> Literally, "Also they shall fear when it is high, and be afraid on the road. The almond-tree will flourish, the locust will grow tall, and the caper-berry will be scattered to the winds, because man is . . .!"

<sup>3</sup> See 12:14. The allegory of these verses has been the subject of much dispute among commentators; but it is probable that they describe, first the loss of physical and nervous strength which accompanies old age, and then (as verse 5) the sudden sickness which may come death. The warning given also is to induce the lines of the interpretation correctly given, without dwelling on its details.

<sup>4</sup> Or perhaps, "the beauty".

## THE SONG OF SONGS

TEXT OF SOLOMON

### CHAPTER 1

- A** KISS from those lips? What cannot enrich the senses like that embrace, nor the fragrance of rare perfumes match its delight. Try very name spoken touches the heart like flow of oil; what wonder the saints should love thee? Draw me after thee where thou wilt, we, we hasten after thee, by the very fragrance of those perfumes allured! To his own house the king has brought me; he is our pride and boast, on his embrace, more revelling than wine, our thoughts shall reign. They love truly that know thy love.
- Dark of skin, and yet I have beauty, daughters of Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup> Black are the tents they have in Cedar; black are Solomon's own curtains; then why not I? Take no note of this striking colour; it was she who saved me, when my own brothers, that had a grudge against me, set me a-watching in the vineyard. I have a vineyard of my own that I have watched well. Tell me, my true love, where is now thy pasture-ground, where now is thy feeding-place under the rose's leaf? Then wouldst not have me wander to and fro where the flocks graze that are none of thine?
- Still bewildered, fairest of woman-kind! May, if thou wilt, wander abroad, and follow with the shepherds' flocks; feed, if thou wilt, those goats of thine beside the shepherds' encampment. My heart's love, prized above all my horses, with Pharaoh's wealth of chariots behind them! Soft as doves are thy cheeks, thy neck smooth as oil. Clothed of gold that neck must have, lashed with silver.
- Now, while the king sits at his wine, breathe out the upland of my thoughts!<sup>2</sup> Close my love is to my heart as the cluster of myrrh

<sup>1</sup> It is not certain, here or throughout the book, whether we are dealing with a series of disconnected encounters, or with a continuous drama. The person speaking has been divided up into paragraphs on the assumption that a kind of dramatic unity is present, though we cannot always be certain who is the speaker. The first three verses are perhaps flattery addressed to king Solomon by the women of his court.

<sup>2</sup> Vers. 4-8. The speaker seems to be a village girl, newly brought to the palace, and still thinking of her sheep home. 'A vineyard', i.e., a vineheart, cf. 8. 12 below.

<sup>3</sup> Vers. 9-12: Spoken to her by king Solomon.

<sup>4</sup> Vers. 13-18: 'The upland of my thoughts') in the original, simply 'my

that lodge is my bosom all the night through. Close he clings to me  
 as if of cyprus in the vine-clad rocks of Engedi.

See how fair is the maid I love! Soft eyes thou hast, like a dove's eyes.

And see how fair is the man I love, how sturdy! Grains grown thus as  
 houses, thick and mine, with its roof of cedars, with a covert of cyprus as  
 for its walls.

## CHAPTER 3

COUNT me no more than wild rose on the lowland plain, wild  
 lily on the mountain slopes.<sup>1</sup>

A lily, matched with these other maidens, a lily among the brambles,  
 she whom I love!

An apple-tree in the wild woodland, shade cool to rest under, fruit  
 sweet to the taste, such is he my heart longs for.

Into his own banquet-hall the king has brought me, shown me  
 the bloom of his love. Cushioned on flowers, apples leaped high  
 about me, and love-sick all the while! His left hand pillows my head,  
 his right hand, even now, ready to embrace me.

An oath, maidens of Jerusalem! By the garden and the wild flame  
 I charge you, wake never from her sleep my heart's love, till wake  
 she will!

The voice I love! See where he comes, how he speeds over the  
 mountains, how he spurs the hills!<sup>2</sup> Gentle our dream was over us  
 first of love as my heart's love. And now he is standing on the other  
 side of this very wall, now he is looking in through each window in  
 turn, peering through every chink. I can hear my true love calling to

spoken! But it has been suggested that the words are meant to introduce a  
 new scene of events. The interruption in verse 14 may be either spoken words  
 from Solomon, or an imagined address by the absent lover.

<sup>1</sup> *am. 1-4*: The village girl appears to be speaking, except in verse 3, which may  
 be addressed to Solomon. 'Lily' is the primary lover in verse 3, Solomon in  
 verse 4.

<sup>2</sup> The end of this verse is sometimes taken literally in the Hebrew text, as  
 meaning 'do not dream or waste (the sweetness of) love (to me) until it pleases  
 me to wake of my own accord'. But the Latin rendering, which interprets 'love'  
 as 'the loved one' seems far simpler. If it is right, Solomon is the speaker; the  
 village girl has fallen asleep over the banquet.

<sup>3</sup> *v. 4-11. v. 4* of the next chapter. Since this passage begins and ends with a  
 warning that the sleeper must not be aroused, the phrase recorded in it is  
 evidently that of a dream. In verse 9, the dreamer seems to enter the field-based  
 scenario of verse 3.

- 9 *rise up, rise up quickly, dear heart, so gentle, so beautiful, rise*  
 10 *up and come with me. Winter is over now, the rain has passed by. At*  
 11 *home, the flowers have begun to blossom; pruning-time has come;*  
 12 *we can hear the turtle-dove cooing already, there at home. There*  
 13 *is green fruit on the fig-trees; the vines in flower are all fragrance.*  
 14 *Run, then, and come, so beautiful, so well beloved, still hiding yourself*  
 15 *as a dove hides in cliff rock or crumbled wall. Show me but thy face,*  
 16 *let me but hear thy voice, that voice sweeter as thy face is fair.*  
 17 *How was it they sang? Catch me the fox, she little fox there, thieving*  
 18 *among the vineyards; vineyards of even, all a-blossoming!*  
 19 *All mine, my true love, and I all his; see where he goes out to pasture*  
 20 *among the lilies. All the day grows cool, and the shadows long. Come*  
 21 *back, my heart's love, swift as gazelle or fawn out on the hills of Hermon.*

## CHAPTER 3

- 1 *In the night watches, as I lay abed, I searched for my heart's love,*  
 2 *and searched in vain. Now to stir abroad, and traverse the city,*  
 3 *searching every alley-way and street for him I love so tenderly! But*  
 4 *for all my search I could not find him. I met the watchmen who go*  
 5 *the city rounds, and asked them whether they had seen my love; then,*  
 6 *when I had scarce left them, I found him, so tenderly loved, and now*  
 7 *that he is mine I will never leave him, never let him go, till I have*  
 8 *brought him into my own mother's house, into the room that saw my*  
 9 *birth.*  
 10 *An oath, oathmen of Jerusalem! By the gazelles and the wild flowers*  
 11 *I charge you, wake never from her sleep my heart's love, all wake*  
 12 *she will!*  
 13 *Who is this that makes her way up by the desert road, erect as a*  
 14 *column of smoke, all speech and incense, and whose sweet scents the*  
 15 *perfumer knows?*  
 16 *See now the bed whereon King Solomon lies, with sleep warlike*  
 17 *to guard him, more terror in Israel!<sup>1</sup> Surround him all, well trained for*

<sup>1</sup> This is usually thought to be the text of some country song; the words "How was it they sang?" have been inserted above, so as to prepare the reader for this.

<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to see how this verse fits into the surroundings. Some would translate "What is it that makes us stay up . . ." and treat verse 3 as the answer; but the analogy of 4, 5 suggests that the reference is rather to the lovers of the poem.

<sup>3</sup> vs. 7-11: These verses are plainly an interlude, in the form of a song (perhaps sung by the women of Jerusalem) in honour of King Solomon's vast love.

bride, and rest with his sweet girl about him, against the porch of the right! A knee ring Solomon will have, of Lebanon wood; a golden frame it must have, on silver props, with cushions of purple; within are pictured tales of love, for your pleasure, maidens of Jerusalem! Come out, maidens of Zion, and see King Solomon wearing the crown that was his mother's gift to him on his day of triumph, the day of his betrothal.

## CHAPTER 4

**H**OW fair thou art, my true love, how fair! Eyes soft as dove's, a   
 crown, half-seen behind thy veil, hair curling in the gusts here,   
 when they come blowing home from the Gilead hills: teeth white   
 as snow-flesh from the washing, well matched as the twin flames that   
 follow them; barren is none. Thy lips a line of scarlet, guardrails of   
 that sweet utterance, thy cheeks show through their veil rose as a   
 halved pomegranate. Thy neck rising proudly, nobly adorned, like   
 David's bearded tower, hung about with a thousand shields, paragon   
 of the brave: graceful thy breasts as two fawns that feed among   
 the lilies.

Till the day grows cool, and the shadows long, myrtle-scented   
 mountain and incense-breathing hill shall be my home.

Fair in every part, my true love, no fault in all thy fashion-   
 ing! Vesture fresh from Lebanon, and come to me, my bride, my   
 queen that shall be! Leave Asna behind thee, Sair and Hannon   
 heights, where the lions of lions are, where the leopards roam the hills.<sup>1</sup>

What a wonder thou hast made, my bride, my true love, what a   
 wound thou hast made in this heart of cedar! And all with one glance   
 of an eye, all with one ringlet straying on thy neck! Sweet, sweet   
 are thy senses, my bride, my true love; wine cannot rival the senses   
 like that enhance, nor any spices match the perfume that breathes   
 from thee. Sweet are thy lips, my bride, as honey dripping from   
 the   
 lip.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, "White, it was made with love, on account of its like the Hebrew men, from the daughters of Jerusalem".

<sup>2</sup> These verses form a borrowing which has no special reference to any particular situation: they may be understood as words addressed to the village girl by her lover, and heard either literally or in the imagination.

<sup>3</sup> My guess that that is literally, "don't be moved". The Hebrew text has simply "Look down", or perhaps, "Make the way down". It is difficult to see why the various heights of the Lebanon range should be mentioned here; indeed, we may suppose that the locus called "the Forest of Lebanon" (III Kg. v. 6 and elsewhere) had its different parts or spots named after these points.

- 9 surely, honey-sweet thy tongue, and soft as milk; the perfume of thy  
 10 garments is very incense. My bride, my true love, a close garden;  
 11 hedged all about, a spring shut in and sealed! Well-ordered room of  
 12 pomegranates, rose of cypress and raft of cedar, no lack there whether  
 of spicegarden or saffron, of calamus, cinnamon, or incense-tree,<sup>1</sup> of  
 13 myrrh, sleep or any more perfume. A stream bordered with gardens;  
 water so fresh never runs tumbling down from Lebanon.  
 14 North wind, awake, wind of the south, awake and come; blow  
 through this garden of mine, and set its fragrance all a-ble.

## CHAPTER 3

- INTO his garden, then, let my true love come, and taste his fruit.<sup>2</sup>  
 The garden gained, my bride, my heart's love, myrrh and spices  
 of mine all reaped; the honey eaten in its mouth, the wine drunk and  
 the milk, that were kept for me! Eat your fill, lovers; drink, sweet-  
 hearts, and drink deep!  
 1 I lie asleep; but oh, my heart is wakeful! A knock on the door, and  
 then my true love's voice! Let me in, my true love, so gentle, my bride,  
 so pure! See, how bedrugged is this head of mine, how the night rain  
 2 have drenched my hair! Ah, but my shift, I have hid it by: how  
 can I put it on again? My fear I washed but now; shall I soil them  
 3 with the dirt? Then my true love thrust his head through the lattice,  
 4 and I trembled inwardly at his touch. I rose up to let him in; but my  
 hands dripped dew with myrrh; still with the shallow myrrh my fingers  
 5 were slippery, so I caught the latch. When I opened, my true love  
 was gone; he had passed me by. How my heart had melted at the sound  
 of his voice! And now I searched for him in vain; there was no answer  
 6 when I called out to him. As they were the city rounds, the watchmen  
 fell in with me, that guard the gates; hurt me, and left me wounded,  
 7 and took away my cloak. I charge you, residents of Jerusalem, tell  
 you in with the man I long for, give him this news of me, that I pine  
 away with love.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Incense-tree'; the Latin version here understands, 'trees of Lebanon', instead of translating the second noun.

<sup>2</sup> vs. 1-4: The first of these verses may describe a vision which passes itself to the imagination of the village girl as she falls asleep; the remainder are evidently a dream, which repeats, with variations, the dream of 2. 1-3.

<sup>3</sup> vs. 5-17: These verses, with the first two of the following chapter, form a dialogue in which the village girl, now awake, relates the anxiety of her companions about her lover's appearance, but puts them off with vague promises as to his whereabouts.

Nay, but tell us, fairest of women, how shall we know this sweet-heart of thine from another's? We must know him from another's sweetheart, if we are to join in the search with thee.

My sweetheart? Among ten thousand you shall know him; so white is the colour of his fleshing, and so red. His head shines like the purest gold; the hair on it lies close as the high palm-branches, seven hairs. His eyes are gentle as doves by the brook-side, only these are as bathed in milk, eyes full of repose.<sup>1</sup> Cheeks crimson as spice-buds of the perfume's own tending; dimples like in the finest myrrh, and you shall know the fragrance of his lips. Nostrils well rounded; gold set with sapphire is not workmanship so delicate; body of ivory, and veins of sapphire blue; legs straight as marble columns, that stand in sockets of gold. Sweet his name as Lebanon itself, noble as Lebanon cedar. Oh, that sweet unexpressed Nothing of him but awakes desire, is Such is my true love, maidens of Jerusalem, such is the companion I have lost.

But where went he, fairest of women, this true love of thine? Tell it us what house he loves, and we will come with thee to search for him.

## CHAPTER 6

WHERE should he be, my true love, but among the spices; where but in his garden, gathering the lilies? All mine, my true love, and I all his; over he would choose the lilies for his pasture-ground.<sup>2</sup>

Fair thou art and graceful, my heart's love; for beauty, Jerusalem itself is not thy match; yet no unbarbed arrow so sweet men's hearts.<sup>3</sup> Turn thy eyes away, that so vex me! Hair dwelling as the goats here, when they come flocking home from the Gilead hills; teeth white as even flesh from the washing, well matched as the twin lambs that follow them; barren is none; thy cheeks shew through their veil ruddy as tiles of porphyry.<sup>4</sup> What are these waves of quiver, and sighing convulsions, and moans about them, past all counting? One there is beyond compare; for none is gentle, none so pure! Only once her mother revealed, she would have no doting but this. Maid

<sup>1</sup> 'Eyes full of repose'; we can only make guesses at the meaning of the Hebrew phrase, 'reposing upon difference', which the Latin version renders 'smiling by the looks'.

<sup>2</sup> *vs.* 1, it evidently continues the thought of the preceding chapter.

<sup>3</sup> *vs.* 3-6. The allusion in *vs.* 4-6 (*cf.* *vs.* 1-3 above) suggests that the village girl is being seduced; but this time, it would seem, by King Solomon (*cf.* *vs.* 1, 15). That he should lit upon the same terms of comparison is perhaps a stroke of deliberate art.

was none that saw her but called her blessed; queen was none, nor  
 a concubine, but spoke in her praise. Who is this, whose coming  
 shows like the dawn of day? No moon so fair, no sun so majestic, no  
 embattled army to awe men's hearts.

10 But when I brought me to the fruit garden, is find apples in the  
 hollows, no use if vines had flowered there, and pomegranates had  
 11 budded, all unknown, my heart mingled me . . . beside the chariot of  
 Ammadab.<sup>1</sup>

12 Come back, maid of Sodom, come back; let us fasten our eyes on  
 thee. Maid of Sodom, come back, come back!<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER 7

WHAT can the women of Sodom give you to fasten your eyes on,  
 if it be not the dance of the Two Camps?<sup>3</sup>

Ah, princely maid, how dainty are the steps of thy unadorned feet!  
 Thighs well shaped as the heads of a necklace, some master-craftsman's  
 1 work; novel delicately carved as a goblet, that has over its neck of  
 2 liquor, belly rounded like a heap of corn amid the hills. Gracious  
 3 thy breasts are as two fawns of the gazelle. Thy neck rising proudly  
 like a tower, but all of ivory; deep, deep thy eyes, like those pools at  
 Hebron, under Beth-rabbim Gate; thy nose imperious as the heap  
 4 that grows on Danazon from the hill-side. Thy hair erect as  
 5 Carmel, height as royal purple the beaded dipples of thy hair. How  
 6 graceful thou art, dear maiden, how fair, how dainty! Thy stature

<sup>1</sup> *ms.* 10, 11: There is no clue to the speaker; naturally we assume that it is still King Solomon. A comparison of the words used with verse 1 above and 7 below suggests that it was his intention to make the village girl his bride. At this point, she has come to play as does the summer South in the Hebrew and in the Sorraogesi *Qere'd*. 'My soul made me love the chariot of Ammadab' (or, of my ardent people), is one which gives an interpretable sense. It is probably implied that the greater welcomed away, but the exact meaning of the verse is inconceivable, and it is not even certain that there may not be a serious gap in the text of the poem.

<sup>2</sup> This verse, in which the word 'Sodom' occurs for the first time, belongs in its context to the succeeding chapter.

<sup>3</sup> *ms.* 10, 12: The first sentence is presumably spoken by the Sodomite herself, the rest by Solomon. It is commonly assumed that this woman of Sodom, for Sodom, III. Kg. i. 31 is the village girl who was the basis of the preceding chapters. But this is not much use to us here, if we will, to regard her as a new character in the drama; a dancer whose charms, lavishly displayed, disengage King Solomon from his former love. At the end of verse 3 the Hebrew text probably means 'to king is held captive by thy singleness', which confirms the impression that King Solomon is the speaker.



challenges the palm tree, why houses the clustering vine. What thought should I have but to reach the tree's top, and gather its fruit? Summer grows in the grape, beneath sweet as apples, smooth soft as my love's caress! as good wine is soft to the palate, as food to lip and throat.

My true love, I am all his, and wife but I the longing of his heart!<sup>1</sup> Come with me, my true love; for on the country ways, the sun covers roof for shelter. Down shall find us in the vineyard, looking as we see what flowers the vine has, and whether they are growing into fruit, whether the pomegranate is blossoming. And there thou shalt be master of my love. The mandarin, what scent they give! Over the door at home there are fruits of every sort a-drying; I put them by, new and old, for my true love to eat.

## CHAPTER 3

WOULD that there were my brother, named as my own mother's friend! Then I could meet thee in the open square and kiss thee, and even so contemptuous looks.<sup>2</sup> To my mother's house I will lead thee, my captive; there thou shalt teach me my lessons, and I will give thee special wine to drink, fresh brewed from my pomegranates. His left hand pillows my head; his right hand, even now, ready to embrace me! As with, maidens of Jerusalem! Never wake from her sleep my heart's love, till wake she will!<sup>3</sup>

Who is this that makes her way up by the desert road, all gaily clad, leaning upon the arm of her true love?<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> vs. 9. "To my love's caress" is the original; the phrase is "to him whom I love", but this introduction must sometimes leave the passage, and the change of a single word gives us "my caress" as in 1. 1 and elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> vs. 10-13. The village girl, who has just evidently said good-bye to the court, looks her lover.

<sup>3</sup> vs. 14-19. Although the transitions of thought are not always easy to follow, this chapter can be read without difficulty as Henry's tale, following on the countess implied in the foregoing chapter. So read, it is curiously graphic, from verse 1, in which the village girl complains of being eyed, to verse 14, in which her lover complains of being courted.

<sup>4</sup> vs. 20-4. The bride, in a dreamy ecstasy, repeats both her own words and Solomon's words from 2. 3, 5.

<sup>5</sup> It is not clear whether the first half of this verse is spoken by the bride, or by someone else, cf. 3. 8. The words "all gaily clad" are in the Septuagint Greek, but not in the Hebrew text. In the second half, the bride speaks, mentioning her lover and their meeting-place but both the actual place in which he was born; this is the same both of the Hebrew text and of the Septuagint Greek, though

When I came and woke thee, it was under the apple-tree, the same  
 where some dreamer overtook thy own mother, where she that bore  
 a child had her hour of shame. Hold me close to thy breast, close as  
 father or brother lies; not death itself is so strong as love, not the grave  
 itself cruel as love unrequited; the rock that lighter it is a blade of  
 rife. Yes, here is a fire no waters avail to quench, no floods to drown;  
 for love, a man will give up all that he has in the world, and think  
 nothing of his loss.

11 A bride whom we have, will unripe for the love of man; but the day  
 will come when a man will claim her; what then shall she have from  
 us then? Soothing as a wall if she be, that wall shall be crowned  
 with silver; yield she as a dove yields, we have cedar boards to furnish  
 her. And I, I am a wall impregnable this breast as a fortress, and the  
 man who claimed me found in me a bringer of ruin.

12 Solomon had a vineyard at Beth-Elhanan, and when he gave the care  
 of it to vine-dressers, each of these must pay a thousand silver pieces  
 for the revenue of it. A vineyard I have of my own, here at my side;  
 keep thy thousand pieces, Solomon, and let each vine-dresser have his  
 own handiwork; not mine to gild his share.<sup>1</sup>

13 Where is thy love of scented garden walks? All the countryside is  
 willing to do that. Give me but the word to come away, thy bride-  
 gown, with thee; hasten away, like gentle as dove that opens the  
 scented hill-side underfoot.

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the Latin version curiously has "There thy mother was carried; there she who bore thee was visited".

<sup>1</sup> vs. 8, 9 are evidently a manuscript stray or insertion, which the Latin  
 quotes here in an to emphasize (in verse 12) her own faithfulness.

<sup>2</sup> vs. 11, 12 vs. 401. 402. 403. 404. The Latin version here has transposed the  
 proper names in various places, which yields no good sense.

## THE BOOK OF WISDOM

### CHAPTER I

**L**ISTEN, all you who are judges here on earth. Learn to love Lyonesse; learn to think high thoughts of what God is, and with sincere hearts aspire to him. Trust him then most, if find him thou wouldst; he does not reveal himself to one that challenges his power. Man's transient thoughts may keep God at a distance, but when the net of strength comes, folly is shown in its true colours; wiser yet old wisdom find her way into the schemer's heart, never yet made her home in a life mortgaged to sin. A holy thing it is, the spirit that brings instruction; how it steals away from the realm of falsehood, holds aloof from every mask devised! It is a watchman, to keep the neighbourhood of wrong-doing. A good friend to man is this spirit of wisdom, that corrects the blasphemy of his wild words; God can witness his secret thoughts, can read his heart unerringly, and shall his whisper go unheard? No, the spirit of the Lord fills the whole world; hence that holds all things in being, it takes cognizance of every sound we utter; how should ill speech go unheeded, or the scrutiny of justice pass it by? The hidden counsel of the goddess will all come to light; no word of it but reaches the divine hearing, and brings their wicked designs, that jealous ear man's lowest whisper cannot escape. <sup>1</sup>

Heaven, then, of whispering, and to ill purpose; ever let your tongues refrain from calumny. Think not that the secret word goes for naught; lying lips were ever the soul's destroying. Death for its goal, is not a little aim missed? Labour he well, that labours to bring doom about his ear! Death was never of God's fashioning; not for his pleasure it does life cease to be—what meant his creation, but that all created things should have being? His hand has he created on earth but for its thriving; none canst in itself the seeds of its own destruction. Think not that mortals born every on earth; <sup>2</sup> no end nor term is it fixed to a life well lived . . . <sup>3</sup> It is the wicked that have brought death on themselves, by word and deed of their own; court death, and seek away in its embrace, keep wry with it, and lay claim to its partnership.

<sup>1</sup> What is said here is understood by some as referring only to human life, others take it as implying that mortality is general even to origin to the fall of Adam.

<sup>2</sup> This verse seems to be incomplete; the old *Stylar Vulgate* adds, on the authority of certain Latin manuscripts, the phrase 'death is earned only by wrong-doing'.

## CHAPTER 1

R EASON they offer, yet reason all aside. Their hours tell them.  
 So brief our time here, so full of discontent, and death brings no  
 remedy! Never a man yet made good his wish to have come back from  
 the grave! Whence came we, none can tell; and it will be all one  
 hereafter whether we lived or no. What is our breath, but a passing  
 vapour; what is our reason, but a spark that sets the brain working?  
 Quench that spark, and our body is turned to ashes; like a spent sigh,  
 our breath is wafted on the air; like the cloud-smoke our life passes  
 away, infinitesimal as the mist powder van dispenses with its cry,  
 leaves down with its last. Time will surely efface our memory, and  
 none will mark the record of our doings. Only a passing shadow, this  
 life of ours, and from us and there is no returning; the door is sealed,  
 and there is no acquiring.

Come then (they say), let us enjoy pleasure, while pleasure is ours;  
 youth does not last, and creation is at our call; of rich wine and well  
 spiced take we our fill. Spring shall not cheat us of her blossoming;  
 crown we our heads with roses ere they wither; let every meadow be  
 a scene of our wanton mirth. Shout we the revels all alike, leave traces  
 everywhere of our joyous passing; no part or lot have we but this.

Helpless innocence shall lie at our mercy; not for us to spare the  
 widow, to respect the venerable head, grown white with years. Might  
 it shall be our right, weakness count the proof of weakness. Where  
 is he, the just man? We must plot to be rid of him; he will not lend him-  
 self to our purposes. Ever he must be thwarting our plans; regardless  
 we the law, he is all respect, departs we from the traditions of our race,  
 he denounces us. What, would he claim knowledge of divine secrets,  
 give himself out as the son of God? The weakness, he, of our  
 sinuous thought; we cannot bear the very sight of him, his life so  
 different from other men's, the path he takes, so far removed from  
 theirs! No better than like coin he counts us, holds aloof from our  
 doings as though they would defile him; needs the just their future  
 happiness, basis of a divine heritage. Put we his claims, then, to  
 the proof; let experience show what end awaits him. If so be just is  
 to be God's son indeed, then God will take up his cause, will save him  
 from the power of his enemies.<sup>1</sup> Outrage and torment, let there be  
 the more we see, let us see that goodness of his in its true colour,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mt. 27. 42.

find out what his patience is worth. Sentenced for him be to a shameful death; by his own way of it, he shall find deliverance.<sup>2</sup>

So like the calculations that are blinded by human rationalism, the secret purposes of God they might not follow; how should they discern that holiness is required, how should they pass their mind on a blessed life? God, to be sure, framed man for an immortal destiny, to the created image of his own endless being; but, since the devil's envy brought death into the world, they make him their model that imitate him for their master.<sup>3</sup>

## CHAPTER 3

**B**UT the souls of the just are in God's hands, and no torment, in death itself, has power to reach them. Dead? Poets think so; I think their art and love, their longing on, annihilating; but all is well with them. The world was nothing but the pains they endure; they themselves have eyes only for what is immortal. So light their suffering, to great the gain they wish God, all the while, did but test them, and seeing them found them worthy of him. His gold, tried in the crucible, his flame-sacrifice, graciously accepted, they do but wait for the time of their deliverance. Then they will shine out, these just souls, unconquerable as the spirits that break out, now here, now there, among the spirits.<sup>4</sup> Theirs to sit in judgement on nations, to subdue whole peoples, under a Lord whose reign shall last for ever. Trust him if they win, over those that had him;<sup>5</sup> faith waits for him, calmly and lovingly, who claims his gift, who shall retain power, if aces they, his chosen servants.<sup>6</sup>

But surely shall the wicked pay for their error,<sup>7</sup> for the claims of a right vengeance, for the Lord's will defied. Their case is pitiable: indeed, who make light of true wisdom and of ordered living; vain their hope, profuse their toil, barren their achievement. Light is wanted as the wine they seek, worthless is their bread; a curse is laid on their begotting. Blessed, rather, for her, that childless is, yet

<sup>2</sup> Some would prefer, less plausibly, 'he shall be judged by his work'.

<sup>3</sup> "They make him their model": the Greek text has, 'they experience it', i.e., death.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* 13. 27.

<sup>5</sup> "Trust him if thou win, over those that had him"; literally, 'those who trust in him shall understand truth'. The word 'trust' in the Old Testament refers, as a rule, either to human loyalty or to divine fidelity.

<sup>6</sup> "The chosen servants": the Greek text gives, 'the holy ones who shall find deliverance, if not his chosen servants'.

<sup>7</sup> Or perhaps, "The suffering of the wicked shall result as there is punishment".

chaste, that never knew the bed of shame; offspring she will not lack,  
 when holy souls have their reward. Nay, let there be some counsellor  
 that has kept his hands clear of wrong, has never harboured measure-  
 less thoughts against the Lord; he too with rare gifts shall be faithfully  
 rewarded, shall have the portion that most contrasts him in God's  
 holy place.<sup>1</sup> A noble harvest good men reap from their labours;  
 wisdom is a root which never yet cast its crop. Not so the adul-  
 tress; never look for children of theirs to father; the offspring of the  
 unbalanced woodland will vanish away.<sup>2</sup> Live they long, they shall  
 be held in no regard, in their late age unremembered; die they soon,  
 they shall die without hope, no comfort to sustain them in the day  
 when all comes to light. Timidly they shall rise in breakfast, the men  
 of the evil-deeds.

## CHAPTER 4

HOW fair a thing is the unswerving life that is nobly lived! Think  
 not the memory of it can fade; God and man alike preserve the  
 record, in life how eagerly interred, in death how long regretted,  
 in stony how crowded with triumph, the conquest gained in faith  
 of honorable living! Let the wicked ponder as they will, it shall  
 nothing avail them; what should their harvest sips ever scribe their  
 roots deep, have the tree lived? Bugeons they may for a little, but  
 the wind will shake their fall hold; root and all, the storm will carry  
 them away. Half-formed, the bough will be snapped off, and their  
 fruit go to waste, unripe, unprofitable. And indeed, when the day  
 of reckoning comes, needs must they should be cited as witnesses  
 against their own perjury, these, the children of their shame, by  
 unfeigned deliverance begotten.<sup>3</sup>

Not so the innocent; though he should die before his time, rest  
 shall be his. A seedling there is that claims reverence, sowing nothing  
 so late, not measured by the lapse of years; count a man pre-  
 valued when he is wise, ripe of age when his life is righteous. Divine  
 favour, divine love banished him from a life he shared with  
 a slaver; caught him away, before wickedness could pervert his  
 thoughts, before wrong-doing could affect his heart; such wickedery

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Deut. 23, 12 ff. 28, 3. 'He too with rare gifts shall be faithfully rewarded'; literally, 'He too shall be given a rare gift of fidelity'.

<sup>2</sup> Some think that adultery, here as often in the Old Testament, is used by a metaphor for the worship of false gods.

<sup>3</sup> In the Greek text, 'even a children's life'.

<sup>4</sup> Some think that the author is condemning, not literal slavery, but marriage with the heathen.

evil has, to turnish however, such sickness as the moving passions stir—  
 clear even on minds that are true metal. With him, only achievement is  
 counted for long apprenticeship; as well the Lord loved him, from as  
 a corrupt world he would grant him with release.

The world looks on, uncomprehending; a hard lesson it is to learn, as  
 that God does reward, does pity his chosen friends, does grant his  
 faithful servants deliverance. Did they know it, the death of the  
 just man, with its promise early achieved, is a reproach to the wicked  
 that live yet, unregarded in their late old age. But what see they? "Here  
 is a man dead, and all his wisdom could not save him. That the  
 Lord pleased all this, and for the saving of him, does not enter  
 their minds. What wonder if the sight fills them with contempt? And  
 they themselves, all the while, are nursing the Lord's contempt; they  
 themselves, doomed to lie there disesteemed among the dead,  
 scornfully a laughing-stock! How they will stand aghast, when he is  
 prison the beholds of their pride? Ruins they shall be, countenances  
 from the foundation, laid for ever perished dry; their moment shall  
 be theirs, and their name shall perish irrecoverably. Alas, the long  
 rally of their sins! Trembling they shall come forward, and the  
 record of their misdeeds shall rise up to confront them.

## CHAPTER 5

HOW boldly, then, will the just man appear, to meet his old  
 persecutors, that thwarted all his striving! And they, in what  
 career fear they will power at the sight of him, amazed at the sudden  
 reversal of his fortunes! Inward remorse will sting a groan from  
 those hearts: Why, these were the men we made into a laughing-stock  
 and a by-word! We, poor fools, mistook the life they lived for  
 madness, their death for ignominy; and now they are reckoned as  
 God's own children, now it is among his holy ones that their lot is cast!

For, it seems, did our thoughts wander from the true path; never  
 did the ray of justice enlighten them; never the true sun shone. Woe  
 it proved, the reckless way of ruin, lonely were the waters we traversed,  
 who missed the path the Lord meant for us. What advantage has  
 brought us, all our pomp and pride? How are we the better for all  
 our vanquished wealth? Nothing of that has been, unobtestantial as  
 a shadow, with it courtes upon his ground. The ship that plunges in

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'When he breaks these sinners, all pulled up as they are'. The  
 sense of the Greek text is probably, 'When he shoves them down headlong'.

<sup>2</sup> *see p. 39* 'These were the men' . . . in the Greek text, 'This is the man' . . .  
 the singular being used throughout.

angry waves, what trace is left of her passage? How will thou track  
 a her foot's pathway through the deep? The bird's flight through air  
 what print betrays? So heavily loaded the still breeze with the beating  
 of her plumes, as she cleaves her noisy way through heaven, wings  
 a flapping, and is gone; and afterwards, what sign of her going? Or be  
 it gone again, shut at a mark, that pierces the air, how quick the  
 wound closes, the journey is forgotten! So with us it was all one,  
 our coming to birth and our coming to be; no trace might we leave  
 behind us of a life well lived; we spent ourselves on ill-doing.

(Such is the lot of sinners, there is the world beneath.)<sup>1</sup> Short-  
 lived are all the hopes of the godless, shreds-down in the wind, flying  
 spray before the storm, smoke that whirls away in the breeze; as soon  
 forgotten as the guest that comes for a day, and comes no more. It  
 is the just that will live for ever; the Lord has their recompense waiting  
 for them, the most high God takes care of them. How glorious is  
 that kingdom, how beautiful that crown, which the Lord will bestow  
 on them! His right hand is there to protect them, his holy arm to be  
 their shield. Indignantly he will take up arms, manning all the  
 forces of creation for vengeance on his enemies. His arm mighti-  
 ness is the breast-plate he will put on, unswerving justice the helmet  
 he wears, a right cause his shield unflinching. See, where be when the  
 sword of strict retribution, and the whole order of nature is banded  
 with him against his reckless foes! Well-armed by his chariot-horn,  
 sped far and wide from yonder cloud-sack, never missing their  
 mark. Tearing hail-storms shall whirl about them, the artillery of  
 his vengeance; fiercely the sea's waves shall roar against them, pitilessly  
 the floods cut them off; the storm-wind shall rise in their faces, and  
 scatter them as the gust scatters chaff. The whole earth ransacked,  
 and the thrones of the mighty pulled down, by their own disobedience,  
 their own malignancy!

## CHAPTER 4

WISDOM more swift than strength; for a man of prudence, the  
 warrior is no match.<sup>2</sup> A word, then, for kings' ears to hear,  
 kings' hearts to heed; a message for you, rulers, wherever you  
 be! Listen well, all you that have tributes at your command,  
 receive orders to do your bidding. Power is none but comes to you  
 from the Lord, nor any royalty but from One who is above all. He

<sup>1</sup> The words enclosed in brackets are not found in the Greek text.

<sup>2</sup> Verses 1 and 23 are not found in the Greek text.



It is that will call you to account for your delays, with a scrutiny that reads your innermost thoughts; you that held his commission and were false to it, justice neglected, the law set aside, his divine will transgressed. Swift and terrible shall be his coming; strictly his doom falls where hands rise high. For the moment, there may be pardon; for greatness, greater torment is reserved. What, should he emerge before high rank, stand in awe of a name, he, the Lord of a universe, that made great and little alike, that made alike for all? Who more has power, him the slayer of kings? Do you, then, royal as thou (for my warning reaches none so nearly), learn wisdom's lesson, and save yourselves from ruin. He that would find health, help must be and hallowed precepts observe; master these he must, if he would make good his defense. Cherish these warnings of mine, and graciously accept them for your instruction.

The bright beacon of wisdom, that never burns dim, how readily is seen by eyes that long for it, how open to their search! Nay, she is befriended with these her suitors, ready to make herself known to them; no reserve given to him, that is up business to greet her; she is there, waiting at his doors. Why, to entertain the very thought of her is mortality of the mind one night's vigil, and all thy cares are over. She goes her rounds, no find was worthy of her favour; in the open street reveals that smiling face of hers, comes deliberately to meet thee. The very first step towards wisdom is the desire for discipline, and how should a man run for discipline without loving it, or as love it without heeding its laws, or heed its laws without winning immortality, or win immortality without drawing near to God? As royal mad it is, then, this desire for wisdom; and you, that have no notion under your sway, as you value thrones and scepters, must hold wisdom in honour; how else shall your reign be secured? (A welcome to light here should be to the world's guidance.)

What wisdom is, whence came its birth, I will now make known to you. Not for me to withhold the secret; from first to last I will tell the story of her origin, bring to light all that may be known of her, no word of the truth passed by. Withhold it? Nay, the pale mirror is that grades his stare was never friend of mine; so each character tells the tale. Wide let wisdom be spread, for the more health of a mankind; what harm security for a people, than prudence on the throne? Learn, then, who will, the lesson of discourse; as my charges, and to his profit.

## CHAPTER 7

**WHAT** of myself? Was not Solomon a mortal man like the rest of you, come down from that first man that was a thing of clay?<sup>1</sup>

I, too, was flesh and blood; my mother I by a-fashioning in my mother's womb; of woman's body my stuff came, and of man's preoccupations; midnight joys went to the making of me. Born was I, and born drew in the common air; drew amid the dust I felt, mud, baby-fancies, my first assurance was a cry. Scolded I must be, and cared not, like the rest. Tell me, was ever king had other manner of coming into life? By one gate all enter life, by one gate all leave it.

Where, then, did the pretence spring that endowed me? Prayer brought it; to God I prayed, and the spirit of wisdom came upon me.<sup>2</sup> This I valued more than kingdom or throne; I thought nothing of my riches in comparison. There was no jewel I could match with it; all my treasures of gold were a handful of dust beside it, my silver as sootied but base clay in presence of it. I measured wisdom more

than health as beauty, preferred her to the light of day; here is a flower which never dies down. Together with her all blessings came to me; boundless prosperity was her gift. All this I enjoyed, with wisdom to prepare my way for me, never guessing that it all sprang from her. The lessons she taught me are riches honestly won, shared without stain, openly proclaimed; a treasure man will find incorruptible. Those who enjoy it are honoured with God's friendship, so high a value he sets on her instruction.

God's gift it is, if speech answers to thought of mine, and thought of mine to the message I am entrusted with. Who else can show who men the true path, check them when they err? We are in his hands, we and every word of ours; our pretences in art, our skill in craftsmanship. Sure knowledge he has imparted to me of all that is; how the world is ordered, what influence have the elements, how the months have their beginning, their middle, and their ending, how the sun's course alters and the seasons resolve, how the years have their cycles, the stars their places. To every living thing its own breed, to every beast its own needs, the winds' rage, and men think deep

<sup>1</sup> Solomon's name is not mentioned in the original, but it is certainly he who is concerned in speaking in this and the following chapters.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. III. Ego. 3. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'The time'.

<sup>4</sup> Or perhaps 'the spirits', either human or diabolic.

thought; the plants keep their several kinds, and each root has its own virtue; all the mysteries and all the surprises of nature were made known to me; wisdom herself taught me, that is the designer of them all.

Mind-enlightening is the influence that dwells in her; not high or apart; one in its source, yet manifold in its operation; subtle, yet easily understood. An influence quick in movement, unmeasurable, penetrative, gentle, right-standing, keen-edged, irresistible, benevolent, kindly, proof against all cover and all solitaire. Nothing is beyond its power, nothing hidden from its view, and each capacity has it that it can pervade the minds of all living men; so pure and subtle an essence is thought. Nothing so agile that it can match wisdom for its agility; nothing can possess this way and that, ethereal as she. From it that ascends from the furrow of divine activity, pure effluence of his glory who is God all-powerful, she finds no passing taint: she, the glow that radiates from eternal light, she, the unsurpassed mirror of God's majesty, she, the faithful echo of his goodness. Alone, with no one to aid her, she is all-powerful; herself ever unchanged, she makes all things new; age after age she finds her way into holy men's hearts, turning them into friends and spokesmen of God. Her familiar it is to be, and none other, that God loves. Brightness is hers beyond the brightness of the sun, and all the stars have much her with light itself, and she carries it; light men still alternate with darkness, is her where is the conspiracy can pull down wisdom from her throne?

## CHAPTER 8

**B**OLD is her ramp from world's end to world's end, and everywhere her gracious ordering manifests itself.

She, from my youth up, has been my heart's true love, my heart's true quest; she was the bride I longed for, betrothed of her beauty. Was I moved by noble birds? No beaver claims than hers, who dwells in God's palace, carried out by the Fates of the world as his favorite; the mirrors of his craftsmanship, the scribes of his plans.<sup>1</sup> Or should life's dream aim be wealth? Why then, who has more wealth at her disposal than wisdom, that turns all to account? Or if sound judgement is man's business, who else on earth goes to a work so skilfully as she?<sup>2</sup> If thy desire be for honest living, man's excellences are the fruit she labours to produce; temperance and

<sup>1</sup> The most striking of verses 3 and 4 is necessary.

<sup>2</sup> Or perhaps, "Who but she is the contriver of all that is?"

prudence the teacher, justice and fortitude, and what in life avails  
 4 man more? Or if wide knowledge be thy ambition, she can inform  
 thee of what is past, make conjecture of the future; she is versed in  
 the subtleties of debate, in the reading of all riddles; marvels and  
 portents she can fathom, and what events time or seasons will bring.  
 5 Her, then, I would take to myself, to share my home; to be my  
 6 counsellor in prosperity, my solace in anxiety and grief. Through  
 her (said I) I shall win fame in the assembly, find honour, though as  
 7 young, amidst the elders. When I sit in judgment, quick wit I needs  
 must show, swift eye into the prison when I appear before them;  
 8 silent they wait my leisure, speak I, they take heed; flows my speech  
 9 on, they listen, hand on lip. She, too, will bring me immortality;  
 10 imperishable the name I shall have to after ages. Mine to rule  
 11 peoples, and have nations at my call; dread tyrants to dance by the  
 very name of me, the name of a king so loved by his people, so brave  
 12 in battle. Then home again, to rest upon her bosom; no sharer with  
 mine, no tedious housewife, lay and contentment all of her.  
 13 So ran my thoughts, and well in my heart I pondered them.  
 14 Wisdom, that brought such kinship with immortality, whose friend-  
 ship was such dear delight, whose wages earned were richer inexhaus-  
 tible, her daily comradeship a training in sound judgment, the  
 disquietude she inspired an earnest of renewal: win her for myself I must,  
 15 and writ about to attain my purpose. I was, indeed, a boy of good  
 16 parts, and nobility of parentage had fallen to my lot; gentle birth above  
 17 the common had endowed me with a body free from blemish.<sup>1</sup> But  
 so to be master of myself was a thing I could not hope to come by,  
 except of God's bounty; I was wise enough already to know whence  
 the gift came. So to the Lord I turned, and made my request of him,  
 praying with all my heart in these words following:

## CHAPTER 9

1 **G**OD of our fathers, Lord of all mercy, thou by thy word hast made  
 2 all things, and thou in thy wisdom hast contrived man to rule  
 3 thy creation, to order the world by a law of right living and of just  
 4 dealing, and give man wised in the honest purpose of his

<sup>1</sup> The Greek would naturally be taken to mean, 'Of riches, gentle birth had endowed me. . . / But it is impossible to imitate the desired system between this and the preceding verse, whatever rendering of that is adopted. The translation given above assumes that 'good' means 'noble born', which is the primary sense of the word in Greek. Literally, 'And being more good I came into an undebilitated body'.

heart. Wisdom I ask of thee, the same wisdom that dwells so near thy throne; do not grudge me a place among thy retinue. Am I not thy servant, and in thy service born? Mortal man thou hast made me, the pure creature of no kind, a mind unapt for judgement and the making of laws. Give man to what perfection he will, if he lacks the wisdom that comes from thee, he is nothing; and me thou hast chosen to reign over thy people; from me sons and daughters of thine must seek for redress. More than this, thou hast bidden me raise thee temple and altar, upon the holy mountain where thou dwellest, model of that holy tabernacle, made long ago, whose pattern was of thy own devising.<sup>1</sup> Wisdom was with thee then,<sup>2</sup> privy to all thy designs, she who stood by thee in the world's creation, and knows thy whole will, the whole tenor of thy commandments. Let her be thy envoy to still me of thy heavenly sanctuary; send her out still upon thy errand, to be at my side too, and share my labours! How else should thy will be made clear to me? For her, no secret, no riddle is too dark; her prudent counsel will be my guide, the fane of her my protection. So shall my task be accomplished as thou wouldest have it be; so shall I give this people of thine just awards, no unworthy heir of the throne my father left me.

What God's purpose is, how should man discover, how should his mind master the secret of the Divine will? So besetting our human thoughts, so hazardous our conjectures! Ever the soul is weighed it down by a mortal body, earth-bound cell that dings the manifold activity of its thought. Hard enough to read the riddle of our life as here, with laborious search unceasing what lies so close to hand; and would we trust our heaven's mysteries too? Thy purposes none may know, unless thou dost grant the gift of wisdom, sending out from high heaven thy own holy spirit. Thus ever were men guided as by the right way, here on earth, and learned to know thy will; ever as since the world began wisdom was the salve they used, that have won thy favour.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Literally, "Which thou didst make ready beforehand from the beginning". The rendering given assumes a reference to the tabernacle in the desert, and the pattern of it shown to Moses on Mount Sinai. Others would interpret the verse as alluding to God's dwelling-place in heaven.

<sup>2</sup> Or perhaps, "Wisdom is ever at thy side".

<sup>3</sup> This verse is represented in the Greek text by three words, meaning "And were saved for, healed by wisdom".

## CHAPTER 10

WISDOM man was but newly made, the lonely father of this crowded world, she it was that watched over him, and set him free from wrong-doing of his own,<sup>1</sup> and gave him the mastery over all things else. Against her Cain rebelled,<sup>2</sup> when he did first wrong, and by murderous spite against his brother compassed his own ruin. Who but she, when the world was a-drowning for Cain's fault,<sup>3</sup> gave it a second term of life, mooring, on a paltry raft, one innocent man to safety? And when the nations went their several ways,<sup>4</sup> banded in a single conspiracy of wickedness, of one man's innocence she will seek now; Abraham must be kept impeccable in God's service, and mocked against pity for his own child. Here was another innocent man, Lot, that owed his preservation to Wisdom, when godless folk were punishing all around him. Except he should, when fire came down upon the Cities of the Plain: those five cities whose shame is yet unexpunged, while smoke issues from the barren soil, and pines and trees bear seasonable fruit, and the pillar of salt stands monument to an unbelieving soul. Fatal neglect of Wisdom's guidance, that could blind their eyes to the claims of honour, and leave the world such a memorial of their folly, as should make the record of their sins unimpaired!

But those who cherish her, Wisdom brings safely out of all their strivings. When Jacob, her faithful servant, was in flight from his brother's anger, she guided him straight to his goal, and on the way showed him the heavenly kingdom, gave him knowledge of holy things. She enriched him by his toil, and gave all his labours a happy issue. A Kinsman went about to get the better of him, but she stood by him and preserved him; kept him safe from his enemies, protected him from their scheming. She would have him waste manfully, and reveal that there is no strength like the strength of wisdom. When

<sup>1</sup> It is not clear whether the first words of this verse refer to Adam's original innocence, or to his deliverance from the death-penalty after he had sinned.

<sup>2</sup> This chapter, in the original, mentions no proper names: a few of them have here been supplied, in accordance with modern usage.

<sup>3</sup> 'For Cain's fault' is an expression difficult to account for, except on the view that the 'sons of God' mentioned in Gen. 6, 2, are the descendants of Seth, the 'children of men' those of Cain.

<sup>4</sup> The Latin here obscures the sense of the original, by describing the nations as 'coming together'. According to the Greek text, they 'were confounded'. Almost certainly a reference to Gen. 11, 1, where the same verb is used. Mistaken, for by this was split up into a multitude of nations, but Wisdom saw to it that one of these, with Abraham as its founder, should be different from the rest.

Joseph, in his innocence, was sold for a slave, Wisdom did not desert him, did not leave him among the gaily, but went down with him into his dungeons. Fast he was bound, but she had not finished with him till she gave him dominion over a whole kingdom, and power to do what he would with his persecutors. So she brought home the lie to those who had traduced him, and won him everlasting fame.

So, too, with that innocent people of Israel, that unfeeling race: it did she not deliver them from the nations that kept them under? Did she not enter into the heart of God's servants, confronting dead rulers with perjury and with murder? Did she not convert to men ill-used in the just reward of their labours? She, too, led them out on their unbroken journey, affording them shelter by day and starry guidance at night. She made a passage for them through the Red Sea, brought them safely through those leagues of water, and charmed up the bodies of their drowned enemy from those unfathomed depths. So, enriched by the spoils of the goddess, they entreated, O Lord, thy holy name, proclaimed with one voice thy sovereign power. Wisdom is opened the dumb mouths, and made the lips of infants vocal with praise.

## CHAPTER 11

WITH Moses set apart the his spokesman,<sup>1</sup> to what good issue he brought all their miseries! Through desert solitudes they journeyed on, picking their camp for from the beams of man, boldly they confronted their enemy, and overcame his malice. When they were thirsty, on thy name they called, and out of the rock's sheer face water was given to heal their thirst, out of the hard flint. Strange illness between the punishments that befell their enemies,<sup>2</sup> also were thirsty while Israel had drink to their heart's content, and the relief of their wear Israel now experienced! Those who once, late drinking blood, had troubled the sources of a living stream, to arrange a marvellous relief against new-born children, didst now give thy people abundant cause to drink, by never unlooked for. How ill it

<sup>1</sup> Didst she trust 'wisdom' to be understood metaphorically for the Jews, as a people newly torn by their exodus from Egypt, this verse seems to preserve a tradition, not found in Wis. 10. 1, that even their children took part in the song of Moses.

<sup>2</sup> The word 'Moses', here and in verse 13, like the names of Egyptian and Ismaelite, has been inserted for the sake of symmetry.

<sup>3</sup> vs. 3-14: The thought of this whole passage is abnormally expressed in the original, and it is still further obscured by the Latin translation in verses 8 and 13, where the Greek has to be used as a guide, if we are to obtain any tolerably correct.

had gone with their adversaries in Egypt, that chief of theirs in the  
doers plainly showed them; in many schools, yet poorly tried, they  
learned to know what concerns the wicked had undergone, fearful to  
thy vengeance. For Israel, only a taste of their faith, only a father's  
correction; for Egypt, as from a king, stern severity and stern doom.  
Tidings from far away, that asked the Egyptians no less than their  
own former sufferings; anguish redoubled, as they grieved over the  
memory of things past! That the same plagues of thine which had  
scorched themselves should be the source of Israel's rejoicing! Thou  
lovedst they felt the Lord's power, then indeed they wondered at  
the revenge thou had brought; wondered at Moses, whom their  
insolence had long ago disinherited, when they exposed him with  
the other children. Thine, that had been Egypt's enemy, had no terror  
for the just.

So lost to pity were these Egyptians, such foolish reasonings led  
them astray, that they worshipped brute<sup>a</sup> reptiles, and despicable  
vermin. And victims of brute beasts thou didst send to increase thy  
recognition, for the most proof that a man's eyes desire for instrument  
of his punishment. Thy power knows no restraint, the power that  
created an ordered world out of dark chaos. It had been easy to send  
a plague of beasts upon them, or noble lions; — so to form new creatures,  
of a ferocity hitherto unknown, breathing fiery breath, glowing on  
fiery flames, terrible sparks darting from their eyes, so that men would  
die of fear at their very aspect, without waiting for proof of their  
power to do harm. Nay, without more ado thou mightest have  
overthrown them with a single blast; all at once thy justice might  
have trampled them down, thy fierce breath whirled them away; but no,  
all thou dost is done in exact measure, all is closely calculated and  
weighed.

No moment passes but thou, if thou wilt, must show thyself avenging;  
that man has power there is no withholding. — the whole world,  
rushed against thee, is but a scruple on the balance, is but a drop of  
dew, falling to earth at sunrise. Only thou art all-mightful, as before  
the Almighty, and dost overlook our human slips, in hope of our  
repentance. All things thou lovest, nor holdst any of thy creatures  
in abhorrence; hate and cross thou couldst not, nor dost ought  
shalt save at thy will, whose summoning word holds them in being.  
They are thine, and thou sparest them; all things that live thou lovest,  
thou, the Master of them all.

<sup>a</sup> It seems likely that the author meant rather, 'unspeakable'; cf. verse 17. The Egyptians, who were credited with worshipping beetles, were punished by plagues of insects.



## CHAPTER 12

THEY kindly influence, Lord, thy gracious influence is all about  
 us. At the first false step, none is so ready to rebuke us, as  
 smiling and warn us of our error, bidding us come back and renew  
 our loyalty to thee. So it was with the former inhabitants of this  
 thy holy land. Good reason thou hast to be thick mercy; of what  
 detestable practices were they not guilty, with those sorceries and  
 unbelieved rites of theirs! Murderers that would not spare their  
 own children, that feasted on human flesh, human muscles and blood,  
 were they to take part in thy assemblies? No, thy will was that our  
 fathers should root them out, the unmarred persons of a race past all  
 aid; and this land, dear to thee as no other, should be more worthily  
 peopled by the sons of God. Yet they, too, were men, and thou  
 wouldst deal gently with them; thou wouldst send harvest in the ear-  
 nest of thy invading host, so wear them down gradually.<sup>1</sup> Not  
 that it was beyond thy power to give pity the mastery over godless-  
 ness by victory in battle, by some plague of ravaging monsters, or  
 by one word of doom. But no, their sentence should be executed by  
 degrees, giving them opportunity to repent; though indeed thou  
 knowest well that theirs was a worthless breed, of a malice so ingrained,  
 that they would turn aside from their ill devices never; from his  
 beginnings, an accursed race.

Not, if thou wast patient with the sinner, was it human respect  
 that persuaded thee to it. Thy sons who shall question, thy doom is  
 who shall gainsay? Will some champion arise to challenge thee on  
 behalf of those rebels, or thou with unmaking the peoples thou hast  
 made? God there is none save thou, that hast a whole world for thy  
 province; and shall thy justice shide our question? Punish thou as  
 mayest as punish thou with king nor emperor can be held to confute  
 thee. So high beyond our measure, and threatened so just in thy  
 dealings! To condemn the innocent was unworthy of such majesty as  
 thine; of all justice, thy power is the true source, universal lordship is  
 the ground of universal law. Only when thy omnipotence is doubted, or  
 with thee seen thy mastery, their reason making manifest, who will  
 not acknowledge thee? elsewhere, with such power at thy disposal, is

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 9. 6: The Greek text is here almost certainly corrupt, and the words rendered "Wee they to take part in thy assemblies" do not correspond to the existing Greek, or to our probable translation of it.

<sup>2</sup> See Gen. 19. 28.

<sup>3</sup> The Greek text, probably by an error, gives "who acknowledge thee".

a lenient judge than prove thyself, riding us with a light rein, and keeping thy terrors in reserve.

- 12 Two lessons thy people were to learn from these dealings of thine; ever should justice and mercy go hand in hand, never should thy own children despair of forestalling thy justice by repentance. What, so patient, so unbarrying, is thy vengeance in the doomed sinner of thy chosen race; always delay, always the opportunity given them  
13 to repent of their misdoings; and wouldst thou show less mercies now in trying the souls of thy own children, bound to thee from of old by a sworn covenant so rich in mercies? It is for our instruction, then, that thou test each creature now in the punishing of our enemies;<sup>1</sup> judge us, let us witness thy clemency, abide thy judgment, let us ever hope for pardon.

- 14 And so it was that thou didst plague the Egyptians,<sup>2</sup> that we knowest and loathest both; their own false gods should be the undoing of them. This was the worst error of all their erring, that they worshipped the moment of hours as gods; silly children had been so  
15 more credulous. Why then, these silly children should have played time pastimes first; of those play-time pastimes if they took us  
16 to heart, then at last they should feel how a God can punish. Hardened they well might be at those sufferings of theirs, the very gods they worshipped the instruments of their distress; a sight enough to convince them that he was the true God, whom all this while they had rejected! But no, they must needs bring upon themselves the full rigour of justice.

## CHAPTER 13

WHAT folly it argues in man's nature, this ignorance of God! So much good seen, and he, who is creator Good,<sup>3</sup> not known! Should they not learn to recognise the Architect by the contemplation of his works? Instead, they have pointed us to fire, or wind, or to the shimmie air, whirling stars, or tempestuous waves, or sun and moon, and made gods of them, to rule the world! Perhaps the beauty of such

<sup>1</sup> The last half of this verse is originally rendered, 'in chastening us, thou dost scourge our enemies (as themselves)'; but it will be seen that such consideration got out of harmony with the rest of the sentence.

<sup>2</sup> The word 'Egyptians' does not occur in the original, but the reference of this passage is almost certainly to them; cf. ch. 11. 15 above. For 'didst plague' the Latin version has, 'thou inflict the utmost torments upon', but this misses the sense. The plagues of fire, fire, locusts, etc., are here contrasted, as being comparatively slight, with the last two plagues, to be mentioned in ch. 17 and 18.

<sup>3</sup> Or perhaps simply, 'who is'.

things bewitched them into mistaking it for divinity? Ay, but what of him who is Master of them all, what excellence must be his, the Author of all beauty, that could make them? Or was it power, and a power's exercise, that awoke their wonderment? Why then, how many times greater must he be, who contrived it! Such great beauty<sup>1</sup> even creatures have, reason is well able to contemplate the Source from which those perfections came.

Yet, if we find fault with men like these, their fault is little by comparison; try they may, but their desire is to find God, and it is in that search they err. They stop short in their inquiry at the contemplation of his creature, trusting only in the senses, that find such beauty there. Because them, then, we may say, if their thoughts could reach far enough to form a judgement about the world around them, how is it they found, on the way, no trace of him who is Master of it? But there are men more wretched yet, men who repose all their confidence in a world of shadows. They give the name of god to what is made by human art, gold and silver that human workmanship has carved into the likeness of living things, blocks of smooth stone that human hands have carved, long ago.

What would you? Here a craftsman in wood has been to the forest and sawed off a fine straight branch; deftly he strips off the bark, and fashions, with patient skill, some piece of carpentry apt for man's needs. As for the chips in his workshop, they cook his meat for him, or he sits and toils his fill. But one more piece of refuse wood is left, that is fit for nothing so cooked is it and so guarded. See him, in an idle moment, pick it up and spend his leisure carving it! A master craftsman this; ere long it has taken shape, made into a man's likeness, or it may be he gives it the form of a senseless beast. And now he paints it with ochre, reddled it must be with all its native colour is lost, all its fibres hidden away. That done, he must find a suitable room to house it, and there lets it into the wall, making it fast with iron clamps. No pains does he spare to keep it from falling; fall it is it does, it shall find no remedy; please you, this is but an image, and cannot shift for itself!

And so, worshipped, the house and children and wife he treats his prayer, addressing himself all the while to a senseless thing. A week, or twofold thing, and for health he sets it; dead, and he will have life of it; childless, and he will have aid of it. How should it set forward life as journeyings, that cannot walk? What service should it do, if made by want, or skill, or good fortune, that is every way unreasonable?

<sup>1</sup> Some manuscripts of the Greek read, "such greatness and beauty".

## CHAPTER 14

NAY, here is one that will go a-scaping, the wild waves for his  
pathway, and perilable wood to carry him, yet he makes his  
prayer to a piece of wood more perilable yet! As for the ship's  
timbers, it was man's contrivance that made the need for them, and  
man's skill that fashioned them; but it is thy fiercely Providence  
that brings her safe to port; thus hast made the sea less a high road  
than may seem by without hands, as if thou wouldst prove to us how  
strong is thy protection, though the sailor have little skill. So careful  
art thou that the gifts thy wisdom affords us should not go unused;  
man ventures his life on a few planks, and the frail barque gives him  
safe conduct across the waves. And what marvel? At the beginning  
of all, when the glasses perished in their pride, was not such a barque  
the refuge of all the world's hopes? Yet the hand was at the helm, and  
the need of life was saved for posterity. A blessing on the wood that  
can so preserve salvation. But ponder idol is accused, no less than  
the man who made it, be far his wicked design, and the fitter thing  
for the legend of divinity that was attached to it. Sinner and sin,  
God hastes both; pardon is none for dead or done. Thus it is that a  
dash of rebuking will come for those idols the Gentiles make; part of  
God's creation though they be, he denounces them, so have they usurped  
man's seat, and laid a trap for fools.

When idols were first devised, then began unbelief; there was  
death in the imitation of them. For indeed they were no part of  
man's life from the first, nor shall be at the last; it was but man's  
folly brought them into the world, and there shall be a short way with  
them yet. Here was some father, bowed with sorrow before his time,  
his child entirely lost of these sorrows, mortal and now dead, he  
must have the likeness made, and with that, rites of imitation must  
become the tradition of his clan. As time went on, impiety habit  
grew into impious custom. A king would have his own likeness  
carved, and his subjects, living the way, so that they could not do  
obedience to him in person, would have his present image set up in  
their view, eager to pay his absent royalty their adoration. And if  
any spot were needed yet for their ignorant superstition, the rivalry  
of confusion afforded it; each of these sought to please his master  
by improving the portrait, with the utmost abuse of his skill, till at  
last the vulgar, carried away by so much grace of art, would account  
him a god whom yesterday they remembered as mortal man. So,  
unaware, the world was caught in the ambush; under the stress, now

of benevolence, now of royal policy, men imparted to rocks and stones the incommunicable name of God.

Nor were they content with these false notions of God's nature; as living in a world besieged by doubts, they maintained by innumerable disorders a state of peace. Peace, amidst their riots of child-murder, in their dark mysteries, their rights consecrated to luxury! Peace, while in them is no respect for life, or for wedlock undisturbed; always the murderous ambush, the jealous pangs of a husband betrayed! All is a web of bloodshed and murder, theft and fraud, corruption and dishonesty, sedition and perjury: houses torn are wasted, kindnesses forgotten, souls defiled, breeds confused, marriages untraced; adultery reigns and wantonness. Name we all these, name we never the idols in whose worship is the cause, the beginning and end, of all these! Their oracles are but raving, their prophecies are but lies; all live in their worshippers, and lightly despise themselves. And so marvel at what hurt should they take from the earth falsely sworn, since all their faith is in dead gods? But indeed they shall pay both scores, idolaters in that thought so fit of God, and perjurers that by their treason slighted all honour: not the power be sworn by, but the justice that keeps a watch over sinners, call over the rogues to account.

## CHAPTER 13

FOLL we, then art God; thou, beneficent and truthful, thou, always patient and merciful towards the world thou governest. Sin we, still we are thy worshippers; have we not proof of thy power? Sin we not, of this, too, we have proof, that thou wilt come to for thy own. To know thou art thou art, is the soul's full health; to have proof of thy power, is the root whence springs immortality. Not for us to be led astray by foolish tales of man's imagining, by the sculptor's barren art, as he picks out some image with morose colours, as our fools gazing at the sight of a lifeless shadow, all seeming and no breathing. Lovers they are of their own ruin, worthy of the fond hopes they cherish, that make such things, we sigh after them, or do them reverence.

Despite we not the potter's toil, that weaves the pliant mud between his fingers, and makes a cup here, a dish there for our use. Serve they noble ends or base, all alike come from the same clay, and what employment each of them shall find, it is the potter's right to determine. But very ill is that soil borrowed, when he uses the same clay to fashion some god that is no god. Beshink them, potter, that it is but a little while since thou thyself wast fashioned out of the same earth,

and yet long, when the lease of thy soul falls due, to that earth thou  
 + shalt return. But no, he never looks forward to the day when he will  
 be past weal; how short life is, he recka not; he must vie with gold-  
 smith and silversmith, he must be even with his neighbour that works  
 in bronze. In pepper-making<sup>1</sup> all his hope lies of winning fame.  
 O heart of dust, O ambition worthless as the mud, life than his own  
 + day more despicable! No thought for the God that was his own  
 Sustainer, quickened him with the pulse of energy, breathed into him  
 + a living spirit! Existence, for him, only a toy to be played with; one  
 life here, only a market-place, where a man must needs get his living  
 + by fair means or foul! Such a man, as no other, dies with his eyes  
 open; from the same earthworm he will make you fragile pot or  
 carved effigy as you will.  
 Fools all, and doomed to misery beyond the common doom of  
 + tyrants,<sup>2</sup> were the countries that from time to time have lorded it over  
 + thy people. Gods, for them, were all the idols of the heathen, with  
 their sightless eyes, their nostrils that never drew breath, deaf ears,  
 + unfeeling hands, and feet that still would walk, yet still were; gods  
 man-made, gods of his fashioning that is a debtor for the very breath  
 he draws. For indeed, the gods man fashions are less than himself;  
 + vain his imagery, since he is but mortal, they already dead; worse he  
 + than they, since he lived once, and they never. And what beasts  
 are those they worship? Of all beasts, the most hateful; such models  
 + they have foolishly chosen as cannot vie with the others!<sup>3</sup> as have no  
 beauty, even beast-fashion, to make them desirable, the least honour-  
 able of God's creatures and the least blessed.

## CHAPTER 14

**F**ITTINGLY, then, were the Egyptians plagued by such beasts  
 + as these, that returned to their undoing.<sup>4</sup> The own people as  
 plague befalls placed their quaggy stomach for dainties, thus wouldst  
 + feed them on quail. Though hunger drove them to feed, the men of  
 Egypt turned away with loathing from the necessities they craved,

<sup>1</sup> Rather, according to the Greek text, 'in passing files out'. The imperative seems to be that such workers covered over their clay figures with metal leaf, even so images they were false; how much more so gold.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Greek text (which probably omits), 'of infants'.

<sup>3</sup> The sense of the original is here highly doubtful.

<sup>4</sup> The names 'Egypt' and 'Egyptians' have, as before, been inserted to make the sense of the original plain. The same is to be said of the following words 'beast' in verse 3, 'beasts, vermin' in verse 7, and 'carnal' in verse 27.

so feel the sight of the frogs that came to punish them. They even  
people should go waiting for a little, only so as to prepare them for  
the deliverance that would follow. Their oppressors must feel the pinch  
of poverty for themselves, the sight of another's charitableness should  
be broken enough. When they themselves encountered these  
malice, and the bias of wishing suspects threatened them with de-  
struction, thy vengeance did not go to all lengths; enough that they  
should be warned by a brief experience of distress; they should be put  
in mind of thy law, yet have the assurance that thou wouldst come to  
their rescue. For indeed, he who turned to look did not win safety  
from the hearse serpent which met his eyes, but from thee, who alone  
canst save.

No better proof could our enemies have, that from all peril thou  
alone deliverest. Bite of locust or sting of fly was the undoing of those;  
no alive could be found against the mortal punishment they had  
deserved. And here were these sons of thine, overpowered even by  
the teeth of venomous serpents, because thy mercy came out to meet  
them and gave relief. They must feel the pinch, to remind them of  
the commandments they had from thee, and then quickly be rescued  
before they sank into deep lethargy, beyond the reach of thy succour.  
Hark our pleasure it was that cured them, but thy word, Lord, that all is  
healing given. Lord of life as of death, thou canst bring us down as to  
the grave and back from the grave: thine is not the fatal stroke man  
deals in anger, that banishes life beyond recall, imprisons the soul  
for ever.

Truly, there is a power there is no exempting: the uplifted arm that is  
plagued impious Egypt, where thou wast treated as a stranger. Strange,  
indeed, to that country were the pains that burned them down, the  
fence hail-scourge; the fire, too, that wasted them. Wonder beyond  
all word, that to water, the all-quenching, fire should rage so fierce;  
no element but must rally in the cause of right. Since the flame it  
would burn low, to spare those creatures a scorching, that were thy  
condemners against the goddess; doubt there should be none, for  
any who saw it, but divine justice was at his heels. Here, in the very  
midst of the water it would burn as never fire burned yet, to blast all  
the fruits of that accursed land. And thy own people, Lord! Thou  
thou didst foster with the food of angels, bread from heaven thou didst  
set before them, which no labour of theirs had made ready, every  
man taking that could bring content, of every appetite the welcome  
choicest. So would thy own harvest manifest a father's universal love; in  
this food should honour the eater's will, turning itself up that  
which he craved most. In Egypt, where and how had refined the fire, as

never melting; plain it was that this dew, which should not smelt the  
 ballast and the rain, was in alliance with them to burn up and  
 to destroy the enemy's harvest. Now, once again, the finger in  
 nature, this time, to give faithful souls their nourishment! So well  
 does the creation obey thee, its author, now exerting all its powers to  
 punish the wicked, now showing its force to do the loyal followers a  
 service!

Why should nature, according that universal bounty of thine, go to  
 all shifts to meet the needs of thy suppliants, but for the instruction  
 of thy own children, Lord, children as well beloved! They were to  
 learn that man lives, not by the opening of crops, but by thy word,  
 never protecting the souls that trust in thee. This means, that never  
 shrunk from the fire while it was a-cooking, would melt before the  
 heat of the sun's first feeble ray. What means this, but that we must  
 be up before the sun to give thee thanks, seeking thy audience with  
 thy day's earliest light? Thinkless if a man be, like the horse that of  
 winter his hopes shall dissolve; like water that goes to waste they  
 shall vanish.

## CHAPTER 17

HIGH above us, Lord, are thy judgements, mysterious thy deal-  
 ings; no still had those Egyptian hearts to understand them.  
 They had thought to smother barbarous tyranny over a nation con-  
 secrated to thee. And now they lay, shut close under their own roofs,  
 darkness their dungeon, their sentence a long-darken night, sealed  
 from the gifts of thy eternal Providence. Did they hope, under that  
 dark veil of oblivion, to find a cloak for secret sinning? Nay, they  
 were scourged by aye, and in grievous dread of the terrors that came  
 to haunt them. Lie snug in their hidden lairs they might not;  
 noises swept down, echoing about their affrighted ears, and boding  
 visions of red faces covered their spirits. Fire itself no light could give  
 them, nor man's clear beam illuminate that hideous night; only now  
 and again a blaze shone out, out of their kindling, terrible to behold;  
 and fear of this unseen radiance lent fresh horror to the signs it  
 showed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *ver. 25, 26.* The meaning here is not very clearly expressed; it is, that the  
 people failed to produce the natural effect, once when it did not smelt the ball-  
 asts which fell in Egypt, and again when it did not melt the masses in the  
 cooking-pots of the furnace (see verse 27 below, and *Ex. 10. 24*).

<sup>2</sup> The original is here very obscure; it may, loosely, 'Only a self-lighted  
 beacon shone upon them as a star-like, full of terror, and being afraid of that  
 being which swayed their observation, they thought the things were worse'.



A mockery, now, suited those magic arts of theirs; ignominious  
 the relief to their boasted cunning. The very men who had pre-  
 fused to rid ailing minds of all discomposure and disguise, were now  
 themselves sick with apprehension, to their great discomfort. Even  
 when no storms were present to disturb them, the memory of prowling  
 beast and hissing serpent filled them with mental torment. All they  
 shut their eyes against the sight of empty air, reason there is none to  
 dread.<sup>1</sup> Nothing gives such proof of cowardice as wickedness detected;  
 hard pressed by conscience, it will meet all its troubles half-way.  
 What else is discomposure, but a betrayal of the strange-ground a  
 reason gives out imagination, already defeated within its own  
 stronghold, fears the unknown more than it fears the true source of  
 its misery. Whether the darkness that held them bound were true  
 night, or that darkness which comes up from the lowest depths of the  
 grave, their tormented reason could not well distinguish;<sup>2</sup> now man-  
 nish appetitions came indeed to scare them, now it was but their  
 own filth that haunted them; in a moment dismay was all  
 about them, and back those wretches.

Into this prison, then, that needed no bars to secure it, all fell alike, or  
 whatever their condition: tiller of the fields, or shepherd, or workman, or  
 that piled his task out in the desert, each was caught at his post, each  
 man abide the inevitable lot. By darkness, like all his fellows, held in a  
 thrall. Did the wind whistle, or bird utter fearful notes deep amid  
 the boughs, were it the dull roar of some waterfall, or the sudden  
 crash of tumbling rocks, or the padding feet of beasts that gambolled  
 past them unseen, or the howl of wild things revelling, or a booming  
 echo from the mountain hollow, it was all one; it would startle them  
 into a great quaking of fear. All around them the world was hushed  
 in the clear sunlight, and then went about their tasks unalarmed; over  
 them about this heavy curtain of night was spread, image of the dark-  
 ness that should be their next abode. Yet each man had a burden  
 heavier to bear than darkness itself, the burden of his own companion-  
 ship.

<sup>1</sup> Reason there is none to dread; the common philosophical meaning of the principle used in the Greek text is 'nothing to be avoided'. It is commonly taken here to mean 'avoidable', but this gives a less aptuous sense.

<sup>2</sup> vs. 21-22: There is much obviously here, and perhaps some corruption in the text. Cf. verse 13, only contextual interpretation is possible in verse, literally, 'Sleeping the same sleep the really impossible night and (the night) coming upon them from the depths of an impossible lower world'.

## CHAPTER 18

**B**RIGHTEST of all, that light shone on thy chosen people. These  
neighbours of theirs, heard but not seen, the Egyptians must con-  
gratulate on their escape from the common doom, thank them for  
letting themselves be, and ask forgiveness for past ill-will.<sup>1</sup> To these  
they gave, not darkness, but a pillar of burning fire, to be the guide  
of their unfamiliar journey, to be the sun whose gracious welcome  
should preserve them from harm.<sup>2</sup>

- A fitting punishment it was for the Egyptians, this loss of light,  
firing that they should be imprisoned in darkness, who had kept the  
eyes shut in prison; thy own sun, through whom that law, which is  
• light unfolding, was to be given to the world. It was their purpose,  
besides, to slay all the children born of that holy stock; but one child  
survived exposure and lived to rebuke them; through him thou dost  
destroy Egypt's own children in their thousands, and drive by  
• assembled host in the rolling waves. Of what should baffle that  
night, our fathers had good warning; confidence in thy evern protection  
• should keep them unafraid. A welcome gift it was to thy people,  
when at one stroke thou didst punish our enemies, and make us proud  
men by slaying us not for thyself!
- In secret they offered their sacrifice, the children of a native race,  
all set apart; with one accord they ratified the divine covenant, which  
blessed them to share the same blessings and the same perils; slaying  
• for perhaps their ancestral hymns of praise. But none was more in  
the country's cry that answered them; here all was dirge for children  
• uniformly mourned. Slave and master, prince and peasant, a common  
doom met them, and a common loss; death levelled all under one sky;  
unpublished everywhere the slain, nor might the living suffice to bury  
• them; all in one moment, the flower of their race had perished. Against

<sup>1</sup> Wis. 2, 9. The Greek text (which is rendered above) has here been under-  
stood from the Latin translation, and the version is given altogether mis-  
representing the sense of the passage it runs: "Brightest of all the light shone on  
thy chosen people. They did not hear the voice of them, but saw them afar from.  
And they glorified thee for their escape from the common doom, thanking thee  
that they were not now, as they had been formerly, the ruthless; and they made  
a request of thee, that thou wouldst distinguish thy friends themselves and the  
Egyptians. The words 'Thou', 'Thyself', 'Thou', and 'Thee', though not  
in the original, have been supplied in this chapter as before.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek text probably means, "which should preserve them from harm  
during their unfamiliar travels".

those earlier plagues, misery had hardened their hearts; Israel they recognised for God's children only when the first-born died.

There was a hush of silence all around, and night had but finished a half her swift journey, when from the heavenly throne, Lord, down is leaped the word omnipotent. Never lighted starry watches on a doomed land: never was sword so sharp, sword so unassailable, as thy word that could tread earth, yet reach up to heaven. All at once is once terror in their dreams; phantoms disarrayed, and sudden alarms overwhelm them; and when they lay a-dying, each fallen where fall is his just, they confessed what first it was they explained; all was as foretold by the dreams that so-disgusted them; they were not suffered to perish ignorant of their offence.

There was a time, too, when God's own people tasted the bitterness of death; but there in the desert a plague fell upon the common folk; but not for long this vengeance lasted. A peerless champion they found in Aaron, that quickly took up the shield of his appointed ministry, the power of intercession that was his, and the moving incense, held thy wrath in check, and brought the calamity to an end none could doubt now he was the man of thy choice! Not by strength of body, nor by prowess in arms, he won the victory;<sup>1</sup> by persuasion he disarmed vengeance, calling to mind the sworn covenant of our race. Already in the vapours were piled thick one on another; but he kept vengeance at bay, standing in between to breach the path between dead and living. Such blessings he born what meant that long robe of his? but the whole world's robe, the first robe of glory but the great floods of our first fathers, the crown on his head but thy own presence? In an eye of time thou hast the destroying angel away; for thy own people, none mark of thy vengeance should be enough.

## CHAPTER 19

**I**T was not so with their impious enemies; with them, God decreed that phylent justice should run its course, knowing well what ill-doing of theirs lay yet in store; have the very men who had allowed the firelines to depart, say, sit them singly on their way, would soon repent of it and march out in pursuit.<sup>2</sup> The business of mourning is still in hand, the grave-sides of the dead still calling for their tears,

<sup>1</sup> That is, according to the Latin Version, 'he overcame the multitude', but some manuscripts of the Greek text give, 'he overcame the (divine) anger'.

<sup>2</sup> The word 'Tesselliter', like the other proper names used in this chapter, have been supplied so as to make the original text less obscure.

they must needs betake themselves to a fresh desperate shift; they would hunt down as fugitives the unwelcome guests of yesterday. Fixing destiny, that laid them to a living doom, made them forget the past, and led them on to complete their tale of suffering and of punishment! For thy people, a strange sea-faring, for these waters, an unimagined manner of death!

Each form of nature, in its own proper sphere, was formed anew as from the beginning, obedient to the new laws thou hadst given it, for the greater safety of thy children. Such was the cloud that overshadowed their camp; such the dry land that appeared where water stood before; the Red Sea unobtrusively crossed, a grassy floor spread out amid the surging billows! So, sheltered by thy hand, they passed on their way, a whole nation of them, strange marvels seen in their passages; light-hearted as hares at pasture or frisking lambs, they rejoiced as in thee, Lord, their rescuer. Such, too, were their memories of Egypt itself; memories of the land that bred lice and could breed no beasts else, the river where no fish lived that could per-  
 11 spawn frogs. Later on, they were to see how birds could be the subject of a new creation, when their appetites craved for richer fare, and quails came up from the sea to content them.

Not were the Egyptians punished without warning: the thunder that terrified them was but echoes of the past. Did not their own wickedness deserve the pains they suffered, a race even more intolerable than the men of Sodom before them? These did but refuse a welcome when strangers came to their doors; the Egyptians demanded their own goods, their own benefactions, to slavery. It is one thing to be called to account for unfriendly treatment of alien folk; but these Egyptians had received the Israelites into their midst with rejoicing, had admitted them to rights of citizenship, and then turned on them with savage ill-treatment. No wonder blindness fell on them, as upon the men of Sodom at Lot's door! But in Egypt the darkness was so bewildering that a man could not find his way through the doors of his own house.

All the elements may be transposed among themselves, keeping up the same answering rhythm, like the notes of a harp altering their mood; so much we may infer with certainty from the signs that have been witnessed in the past.<sup>1</sup> Land-beasts turned to water-beasts, and the firm ground was trodden by creatures born to swim. Fire

<sup>1</sup> The meaning of this passage is highly doubtful, and it is possible that the text has been badly transmitted. But the context seems to be that the history of miracles shows a kind of reciprocity between the elements, earth yielding to water and then water to land, fire to fire and then fire to ice.

surpassed its own nature, when water began to quench it; then fire, in its turn, could not waste the final flesh of living creatures that returned it, nor melt that heavenly food that melted easily in fire. No man would then neglect, Lord, to magnify thy people and with their numbers; never wouldst thou leave them unprotected, but always and everywhere career to their side.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> vs. 17-18: It is not certain, from the context, whether these verses refer entirely to the period of the Exodus.

## THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTICUS

### PREFACE

MANY are the important truths conveyed to us by the law, by the prophets and those other writers who have followed them. Based on basis of its own philosophical tradition, suited not only to instruct those who cult its language, but to teach, in spoken or written form, the outside world too, and bring it great enlightenment. No wonder if my own grandfather, Jeron, who had devoted himself to the careful study of the law, the prophets, and was other ancestral records, had a mind to put something in writing himself that should bear on this philosophical tradition, to claim the attention of students who had already mastered it, and to encourage their observance of the law.

I must beg its readers to come well-disposed to their task, and to follow me closely, making allowances for me whenever I seem to have failed in the right marshalling of words, as I pass on wisdom as second hand. Hebrew words lose their force when they are translated into another language; moreover, when the Hebrews read out the law, the prophets, and the other books among themselves, they read them out in a greatly different form.

It was in my thirty-eight year,<sup>1</sup> in the reign of Eusepius, that I went to Egypt and spent some time there. When I found writings preserved there which were of high doctrinal value, it seemed to me right well being that I, too, should be at some pains; I would set about translating this book. Learning I gave to the task and long labour, and so brought it to an end; who will apply their minds to it, shall find out how a man must frame his conduct if he would live by the divine law.

### CHAPTER I

ALL wisdom has one source; it dwells with the Lord God before  
1 A never time began. Sand there never ceases, as the rain-drops, as  
the days of the world's abiding; heaven-height there never ceases,  
2 as the wide earth, as the depth of the world's breadth, are God's wisdom  
3 that came into its origin, that was before all. First she is of all

<sup>1</sup> In the original, 'the thirty-eight year'; some think that the author refers to 1880-1, the thirty-eighth regnal year of Probus Eusepius II. If the year meant is that of his own age, he may equally well have lived under Probus Eusepius I (243-260-1).

counted things; time was never when the riddle of thought went unried. (What is wisdom's feast? God's word alone. What is her course? His eternal unchangeableness).<sup>2</sup> Raised her nose beyond all search, wise her counsels beyond all knowing; (no high her teaching is to be plainly revealed, no manifold her movements to be understood). There is but one God, high creator of all things, sitting on his throne to govern us, a great king, worthy of all doers: he it was that created us, through his holy Spirit. His eye could take in the whole range of our being: and so he poured her out upon all his creation, upon all living things, upon all the souls that loved him, in the measure of his gift to each.

To fear the Lord is man's pride and honor, is joy, is a prize to be counted; comfort it brings to the heart, happiness and content and a long life bestows: well it is, at his last hour, for the man who fears the Lord; his day of death shall be a day of blessing. (Love of God is a wisdom worth the having: welcome the light when it shows itself, is when it gives proof of its wondrous power.) Wouldst thou be wise, is the first step is fear of the Lord; to his chosen servants, a gift came down from the womb; it goes with holy motherhood, and sets its mark on his true worshippers. (The fear of the Lord leads wisdom: that piety which is here: each piety as shall keep the heart soft and is make it acceptable, bring it joy and content. Well it shall be indeed is for the man who fears the Lord; at his last end he shall win blessing.) God's fear is wisdom's fulfillment, yields the deep draught that sets us free: never a monk or cranny in thy house but shall be filled with the store of its harvesting. The fear of the Lord is wisdom's crown; is with this, power and health are thine to enjoy. (This fear itself is God's gift, no less than the wisdom which is counted out under his eye). Wisdom it is that imparts to us all our knowledge, all our powers of discernment; hold her fast, and she will set thee on a pinnacle of renown; yet none this wisdom meet be in fear of the Lord, or a long life shall never forsake from it.

True insight wisdom has in her treasure-house, and the know-  
ledge that sanctifies: no wonder if sinners hate the name of her.  
The fear of the Lord drives out sin; the rich soul shall never find it

<sup>2</sup> The verses printed in brackets, here and in later chapters, are either not found in the Greek text at all, or found only in certain manuscripts of it. There are many other differences of detail between the Greek and the Latin, too numerous to be mentioned in these notes. The Vatican version (which has been preserved to us only in small part) must have been current in several different forms at the time when our version was made and it seems probable that the Latin has somewhere included two alternative sides by side (cf. verses 26 and 27, 32 of this chapter).

a patient, in own wild mood overbalances it. Patience hides her time,  
 and with time, custom comes back to her; praise shall be upon  
 every lip for the wise thought that checked, for a while, her utterance.  
 a Deep in wisdom's treasure-house is hidden the secret of all knowledge;  
 a no wonder if sinners hate the name of piety. My son, if on wisdom  
 thy heart is set, keep the commandments, and God will grant thy  
 a wish; fear of the Lord is true wisdom, true learning, and his will is  
 a to see thee loyal and patient; thou shalt have no empty coffin then.  
 a Let not thy fear of the Lord be overcast with doubt; never come  
 to him with a heart that hesitates.  
 a Do not play false in thy dealings with men, and suffer thy own  
 a words to condemn thee. Watch those words well, so they may trip  
 a thee up; thou wilt have compassed thy own disaster, if God should  
 reveal thy secret thoughts at last. Wouldst thou be thrown down,  
 a to be mocked by all thy neighbours, a heart that came to meet the  
 Lord grudgingly, full of the spite of jealousy and deceit?

## CHAPTER 2

**M**Y son, if thy mind is to enter the Lord's service (wait there in  
 his presence, with honesty of purpose and with all reverence,  
 a and) prepare thyself to be put to the test. Submissive be thy heart,  
 and ready to hear all (to wise advice lend a ready ear), and be never  
 a hasty when all times befit thee. Wait for God, cling to God and wait  
 a for him; at the end of it, thy life shall blessedness know. Accept all that  
 a comes to thee, patient in sorrow, tranquillise long suffering; for  
 gold and silver the crucible, it is in the furnace of affliction men  
 a show themselves worthy of his acceptance. Trust in him, and he will  
 lift thee to thy feet again; go straight on thy way, and fit in him thy  
 hope; hold fast thy fear of him, and let that fear be the habit of thy  
 later age).  
 a All ye that fear the Lord, wait patiently for his service; lose  
 a sight of him, and you shall fall by the way. Fear him? Ay, and trust  
 a him; you shall not miss your reward. Fear him? Ay, and in your  
 a hope in him; his mercy you shall find, to your great comfort. (Fear  
 a him? Ay, and love him; your hearts shall be delighted.) My sons,  
 look back on the ages that are past; was ever man yet that trusted in  
 a the Lord, and was disappointed, held fast to his commandments, and  
 a was forsaken, prayed to him, and found the prayer unanswered? A  
 gracious God and a merciful; in times of affliction, he turns our sin  
 unpunished, watches over all that with true hearts turn to him.



Out upon the false heart, the chattering lips, the hands busy with a ill-doing, upon the dinner that will go two ways about it, to enter the land of his desire. Out upon the unswerving will, that trust in God has in none, and from him shall have no succour. Out upon the men who as have given up hope (forsaking the right path, and in false paths breaking them); what shift will they make when the Lord calls them in to account? Fear the Lord, and doubt his promises? Love him, and is not keep true to the way he shows us? Fear the Lord, and not study is to know his will? Love him, and not find contentment in his law? Is Fear God, and not keep the will alert, the soul set apart for him? (To us fear God is to keep his commandments, and wait patiently until he comes to relieve us.) Be this our thought, that it is God's power we as have to reckon with, not man's, if there is no power done. And he as has mercy over at his side, a God merciful as he is just.

## CHAPTER 3

**W**HEREVER choice words are found, wisdom is the mother of them; loyalty and love went to the making of them. Speak we as one of a father's rights; do you, sons, give good heed, and follow these counsels, if thrive you would. God will have children honour as their fathers; a mother's rights are his own strict ordinance. (A lover as of God will fail to prayer over his sin and sin no more so, all his life long, his prayer shall find audience.) . . . what he lays up for himself; as that gives his mother her due.<sup>1</sup> As thou wouldst have joy of thy own as children, as thou wouldst be heard when thou faltest to praying, honour thy father still. A father honoured is long life won; a father as well obeyed is a mother's heart comforted. Note that from the Lord as has honours the parents who gave him life, strive to render even as greater service. Thy father honours, in deed and in word and in all as manner of forbearance; as thou shalt have his blessing, a blessing as that will endure as thy life's end. What is the business of a man's as house? A father's blessing. What were up the foundations of it? A mother's care. Never make a boast of thy father's as ill name; what, as should his discredit be thy reward? Nay, for a father's good repute is as ill, as you must go proudly, or hang his head. My son, when thy as father grows old, befriended him; long as he lives, never of that he as repining. Grieve he fable of with, make allowance for him, now as is

<sup>1</sup> vs. 4, 5. The Latin version here inserts a sentence which seems out of place (perhaps belonging to the end of the foregoing chapter); it omits the words given in the Greek text: 'He who honours his father will prosper for his own sake'.

thy mother's vigour despise him. The kindness shewn to thy father  
 11 will not go forgotten; favour it shall bring thee in acquisition of thy  
 12 mother's grace.<sup>1</sup> Faithfully it shall be made good to thee, nor shall  
 13 thou be forgotten when the time of affliction comes; like life in summer  
 14 is the record of thy ties shall melt away. Turnish his name, that  
 15 leaves his father forsaken, carved his memory, that saves a mother's heart.

16 My son, go about thy own business with a quiet mind; man's love  
 17 is worth more than their profit. The greater thou art, the more is  
 18 all things above thyself; so thou shalt win favour with God...<sup>2</sup> Sovere-  
 19ignty belongs to God and no other; they honour him most that most  
 20 keep humility. Seek not to know what is far above thee; search not

beyond thy range; let thy mind ever dwell on the duty God has given  
 21 thee to do (content to be ignorant of all besides). Things there were  
 22 not, what need is there for thee to know? Leave off, then, thy crook  
 23 questioning about such things as little concern thee (and be content  
 24 with thy ignorance), never lies in thy view than lies within human  
 25 wiles. By such fancies, many have been led astray, and their thoughts  
 26 chained to folly.<sup>3</sup>

27 . . . Hear that is obstinate shall choke ill at the last; danger loved  
 28 is death's woe. (Hear that will try both ways shall prosper little; he  
 29 falls into the snare that goes a-straying.) Hear that will not stand  
 30 shall be weighed down by its own troubles; the sterner is ever ready for  
 31 one sin more. For one sort of men there is no remedy, the proud;  
 32 too deep a root the evil has taken, before they know it. Hear that is  
 33 wise will prove itself in wise company; ever greedy of wise talk is the  
 34 ear that knows how to listen. (Hear that is wise and discerning will  
 35 keep clear of wrong, and by honest dealings prosper yet.)

36 No fire burns so high but water may quench it; alone-giving was  
 37 never sin's standing. God marks the grateful eye, and remembers it;  
 38 here is sure support not against peril of falling.

## CHAPTER 4

1 **M**Y son, do not grudge a poor man the sleep he asks, nor pain him  
 2 by, with averted look, in his need. Wouldn't thou despise his  
 3 hungry glance, and add to the burden of his distress? Wouldn't thou

<sup>1</sup> In the Greek text, the gift of sleep comes not for his mother's sin, but for his own. Cf. *homerus* Ps. 36. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Some manuscripts and versions add, at the end of this verse, "Heed's esteem and honour is to be had for the asking, but it is in the trouble that hidden things are revealed".

<sup>3</sup> Some manuscripts and versions add, at the end of this verse, "What eyes, what light, hear not that thou hast knowledge, where knowledge is none".

disappoint his expectations by bidding him wait for the gift? Nay, a spirit thou neverst please of the friendless; loath thy suppliant in the face, and of his poverty take good heed; shall his balled rage come to thee behind thy back? The curse of a despairing man does not go unheard; his Master is listening.

To the common sort of men give friendly welcome, before an elder to show thy pride, and to a man of eminence bow meekly thy head. If a poor man would speak to thee, lend him thy ear without grudging (give him his due), and let him have patient and friendly answer. If he be wronged by oppression, welcome thou needs must win him, nor be vexed by his importunity. When thou standest in judgment, be a father to the orphan, a husband to the widow that bore thee; so is the most High in obedient ear shall reckon thee, and show thee more than a mother's kindness.

How life wisdom beeches into her children, befriends all that have recourse to her (and guides them in the right way). Love her, as thou art loved; life; wait early at her doors, if thou wouldst win her sweet embrace. Life the price, if thou hold her fast; come she in at the door, God's blessing comes with her; court paid to her, worship is paid to the Holy One; love given to her, God's love made thine to return for it. A word from her, and the world is at thy feet, a sight of her face, and thou shalt dwell ever secure; trust her, and she will be thy inheritance, settled on the helm of thy body. When first she chooses a man out, she does but make trial of his company; she puts him to the proof, tryeth him with her fires, tasting him with her difficult love, until at last she has explored his every thought, and can trust him perfectly. Then she gives him confidence, coming out to openly to meet him; gladdens him with her smile, and tells him all is her secrets (makes him rich with store of true knowledge, and enables him to discern the right). Only if he strays away from her does she abandon him, and leave him at the mercy of his fate.

My son, watch well for thy opportunity, even on thy guard against to wrong-doing; though life itself were in peril, never be ashamed to speak the truth. Shame, that is the grace and glory of a man, may yet make a sinner of him. Wouldst thou hold another man's honour as dearer than thy own, and swear the lie at thy neck's peril? (Nay, it speak out without shame, though thy own neighbour should be threatened with ruin.) Withhold not thy counsel while safety may be yet be won; thy wisdom is not to be hidden away like a rolled treasure. Wisdom will needs a tongue to declare it; no discretion or knowledge is so shameful counsel but waits on the apt word; (how else should men be corrected in well doing?) Speak thou never against the known or

- truth; and if thy ignorance has erred, own thy error. Be never ashamed to confess thy faults, nor, for thy faults, put thyself in any man's power.
- Wouldst thou defy, and openly, a ruler's authority? Thou hast better wits against the stream's force.<sup>1</sup>
- Do battle for the right, all thy life long, and with thy last breath do battle for the right still; God, in thy cause, will overcome thy enemies.
- A glib tongue, and hands that hang down idle, such be not thine.
- Like if there must be, let not thy own house feel the heat of it, thy own streams heated, thy own slaves heated to the earth.
- Open hand when the word is Take, shut when the word is Give; such be not thine.

## CHAPTER 5

- WILT thou look round at ill-gotten gains, and tell thyself thou hast enough for all thy needs? (Trust me, when vengeance finds thee out, all this shall nothing avail thee.) In mankind's sight, do not follow the lust of thy heart, boasting of thy strength, and asking who will call thee to account for thy doings? God will find a way to punish thee. Was ever flatter thyself that thou hast sinned and come away scot-free; the eternal justice waits its time. It were it that sin's pardon should withhold thee to the attack. Does thou tell thyself God's mercies are great, and he will overlook thy sin for all they are so many? Behold thou that his vengeance follows swiftly on the heels of his mercy; it is a jealous eye that watches the sinners. O, wouldst thou make thee work of turning to the Lord, and put it off from day to day? Swift feels his anger and perdition, when the time for vengeance is ripe. And must thy thoughts still dwell on the ill-gotten gains, that shall smoking assail thee when vengeance finds thee out?
- Turn not with every wind, nor walk in every way that others do, till their hypocrisy is found out. Pave let thy feet be set on the path the Lord has chosen for thee; be true to thy own thought and to the knowledge thou hast, and ever let the compass of peace and justice guide thee on thy way.

<sup>1</sup> In. 11, 12. The Greek text here varies considerably from the Latin version. It reads: 'Be never ashamed to confess thy faults; wouldst thou raise against the stream's force? Never put thyself in the power of a fool, and never flatter a ruler's greatness'. Throughout the last fourteen verses of this chapter, the Latin and the Greek have many different words of meaning, and neither can be interpreted with much certainty.

Thou answer and what answer mine can give but he who listens patiently, and hears all.

If discomfited thou wert, give thy neighbour his answer; if none, a tongue held in bet, or some ill-willed word will shame thee; speech is wrong was over the wise man's passport to fame, the fool's wedding.

Never who the name of back-biter, by thy own tongue strapped is into shame. A thief must blush and do penance, a hypocrite man it will quest and avoid; the back-biter earns indignation and misery and disgrace all at once.

For all men, high and low, make the same excuse.

## CHAPTER 4

**WOULDEST** thou rather have thy neighbour enemy than friend? Wouldst thou earn, by ill-caring, an ill name, and be despised for such faults as these, envy and hypocrisy?

Wilt thou turn thy head, bull-fashion, and glory in thy own strength? What if that strength should be brought down by thy own folly? Then wilt thou be as hyacinth than some dry tree-strung out in the desert, its leaves withered, its hope of fruit all gone. Ill nature brings a man to an ill end, the scorn of his enemies and a prey to jealousy.

Guardians of speech, how it wins friends everywhere, how it disarms its enemies! Never was a good man wanting for a gracious word. Be as good trees with all, but for thy trusted counsellor, choose one in a thousand. Friends are best made to the hour of trial; do not bestow thy confidence lightly; some men are but fair-weather friends, and will not stand the test of adversity. Some will ever from a friend to foe, and lay bare old grudges, old quarrels, to reproach thee; some will be thy keen companions, but desert thee when trouble is afoot. Or else, though he be a true friend, one will set himself up to be thy rival, and play the master among thy servants; let him learn to behave meekly, and rid thee of his presence, before thou canst have true and tried friendship between you.<sup>1</sup> From enemies thou must keep thy distance; against friends be on thy guard. True friendship, next protection and next treasure found; true friendship, a thing beyond compare, its tried loyalty outweighing gold and silver; true friendship, in life and death the value thou needest; only those who fear God will come by it; the fear of God gives a friendship evenly shared, friend matched with friend.

<sup>1</sup> Ec. 11, 16. The sense of these verses is doubtful. The Greek text has, for verse 12, (liter.) if thou art brought low, he will turn against thee, and hide his presence away from thee.

- 11 My son, leave the lessons of youth, and garner wisdom against thy  
 12 grey hairs; ploughman and sower thou must come to the task, and  
 13 wait patiently for the harvest; how light the toil wisdom claims, the  
 14 rewards of her how soon enjoyed! Only to undisciplined minds she  
 15 seems an over-hard task-mistress; not for long will the fool endure her  
 16 company; here is a weight (says he) that tries my strength too much,  
 17 and away he casts it. The enlightenment which comes with wisdom  
 18 is true to its name, known to so few, yet where men are acquainted  
 19 with it, it waits to light them into the presence of God.<sup>1</sup> My son, give  
 20 good heed to the sayings of experience, do not spurn this counsel of  
 21 mine. Yield first of thine to wisdom's fitness, next of thine to her  
 22 will, shoulder of thine to her yoke; do not chafe at her bonds. Make  
 23 her thy whole heart's quest, follow, as best thou canst, the path she  
 24 makes known to thee; search, and thou wilt find her, hold fast, and  
 25 never let her go; in good time, thou shalt repeat in her, and find her  
 26 well delight. In time, these fetters of hers shall prove a strong pro-  
 27 tection, a sure support, that better of hers a badge of honour about thy  
 28 neck; there is life in these rappings, healing virtue in these bonds.  
 29 Fete is true shall do thee more honour, more in none shall rest more  
 30 solid on thy brow.  
 31 My son, mark well and learn, take heed and be wise; here is true  
 32 knowledge for the listening, here is wisdom if thou wilt lend an ear.  
 33 Where older men than thou are met, and wiser, take thou thy place,  
 34 and give thy whole heart to their teaching; old tales of God's wonders  
 35 thou shalt hear, and sayings of much renown. A man of discretion  
 36 if thou find, wait on him at day-break, and wear out his door-step with  
 37 thy often visiting. Think ever upon God's commandments, and be  
 38 constant in the following of his will; he sees he will give thee courage,  
 39 and all thy desire for wisdom shall be granted thee.

## CHAPTER 7

- 1 **HARM** if thou do none, harm shall none befall thee: clear of  
 2 wrong is clear of mishap. What need, my son, to seek in the  
 3 favour of mischief, and reap a sorrowful harvest?  
 4 Never ask of God high station, or of the king preferment.

<sup>1</sup> The Greek text runs, 'Wisdom is true to her name, she is revealed to few', which seems to imply a play upon words quite foreign to English vocabulary. The Latin version runs literally, 'The wisdom of doctrine is true to its name: it is revealed to few, but to those to whom it is known, it abides ever in the sight of God'. There is an accidental resemblance in Hebrew between the name 'wisdom' and the verb 'to wait'.

Never try to prove thy innocence before God, who knows all, nor thy sobriety before the king.

Do not sit in judgement, unless thou hast enough courage to crush the wrong; if thou favour the rich, what else is thy award but a snare for thy own virtue?

Let not fault of thine be the source of public censure; no need to embroil thyself with thy own neighbours.

Never tack sin to sin; for the first thou art in arrears.

Do not lose confidence in thy praying, or leave almsgiving undone.

Do not flatter thyself that God will look favourably on thy many offerings, as if he, the most High, could not refuse thy gifts.

Do not triumph over the desponding; God, who sees all, can turn it down and lift them up.

Not against thy own brother trump up the charge; nor thy neighbour a sinner.

Keep the least falsehood avoid in thy speech; as ill grows the habit if of it.

Idle talk becomes thee not, when thou standest with the citizens in a council, nor, when thou prayest, repetition of thy prayer.

As well repine not; the farmer's trouble is of divine appointment.

Think not to pass unnoticed, where sinners are so many; behold it thee rather, how swiftly comes vengeance, and so curb thy unruly tongue; for sinful flesh, fire and worm.

Thou hast a friend who is over-long in thy debt; still do not wrong a king, dear to thee as a brother, and shall gold ever meet? Thou hast a good wife, a thrifty woman that has thrown in her lot, in the fear of the Lord, with thine; do not leave her; that modesty of hers is a price gold cannot buy. The slave that works for thee faithfully, is the kinsling that depends on thee for his livelihood, injure not; a thrifty slave thou shouldst love as thy own self, not hounding him of idleness or leaving him to starve. Cattle thou hast; tend them well, is not part with them while they do thee good service. Thou hast a son; train him to bear the yoke from their youth up. Thou hast a daughter; keep her chaste, and do not spoil her with thy wealth; a daughter well is great good done, if a thrifty husband thou find her. And thy own wife, if thou lovest her, never do thou forsake, trusting in thy happiness to come other than shall be little to thy mind.

And oh, with thy whole heart honour thy father, nor forget thy mother's praise; behold it thee, that without them thou hadst had no being, and repay the service they have done thee.

With all thy soul fear God, and reverence his priests. He made thee, wilt thou not direct all thy powers to his love? Wilt thou leave

- 10 his ministers unbefriended? Rather, with all thy soul fear God, and to  
 his priests give their due; with gift of the consecrated shoulder give  
 11 thyself of what is owing. The priests must have their share, by law  
 prescribed, of first-fruits and of offering for transgressions; even if thou  
 hast committed a fault in ignorance, a bribe is claimed for thy cleansing.  
 12 The gift of the consecrated shoulder thou must make to the Lord,  
 and the offering of all that is dedicated, and the half first-fruits;  
 13 moreover, thou must open thy hand to the poor; so thy atonement  
 shall be perfect, and perfect thy blessing.  
 14 No living man but is thankful for the gift given; and it is ill done  
 15 to withhold thy favours even from the dead. Flee not to confound the  
 16 distressed, let the mourner have thee for his comfort. Without quake  
 17 visit the sick, no surer way of winning thy neighbour's love. Re-  
 member at all times what thou must come to at the last, and thou shalt  
 never do amiss.

## CHAPTER 1

- I**F quarrel thou hast, let it not be with a prince, that may reach  
 1 thy person; nor with a rich man, that may implead thee, with all  
 the power there is in silver and gold to corrupt men, and sway even  
 2 the hearts of kings; nor with a gift-talker, thou dost but add fuel to  
 his fire.  
 3 Be not familiar with a boar; thou wilt hear no good of thy ancestry.  
 4 Seek not the slaver that would amend his ways; reproach comes  
 5 random, where all stand in need of correction. Nor fail in respect for  
 6 the aged; it is of our staff grey hairs are made.<sup>1</sup> Rejoice not over thy  
 7 enemy's death; we all die, not for other men's rejoicing. Do not be  
 8 contemptuous of what older and wiser men have to tell thee; by their  
 9 loss live thou, if wise thou wouldst be, and have the secret of dis-  
 10 contentment, and win favour in the service of the great. Do not let them  
 pass thee by, those traditioned older men, have learned from their  
 11 fathers; they will turn thee into a man of judgement, but master  
 can make when answer is needed.  
 12 Wouldst thou converse with a slave? Make sure thou art not  
 fleeing the fumes of his passions, thyself in peril of a scolding.  
 13 Wouldst thou make reply to the railing accuser? Make sure he is  
 not hiding a trap to ensnare thee.  
 14 Lend to one who can master thee? Then lend is lost. Pledge not  
 15 thyself beyond thy means; count ever thy pledge foolish. Dispute  
 16 not a judge's award; who judges by right rule if not he? Tryed not

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'none grow old out of (people like) us'.



with a rash conclusion, if thou wouldst not shoulder all his misfortune; he will go his own way, and thou shalt the reward of his folly. Quarrel is not with a man of quick words; as a desert road he is no companion for thee; he cares nothing for bloodshed, and none shall aid thee in thy fall. Take not counsel with a fool; he knows none but his own way is of it. Shun not thy secret place with a stranger; thou knowest not what trouble he may breed. Never open to any man thy whole heart; as an ill request he may make, by bringing shame on thee.

## CHAPTER 9

NEVER show thyself a jealous husband to the wife thou lovest; she may learn too well the ruinous lesson. Never give thy soul into a woman's power, and let her command the fortress of it, as thy shame. Never turn to look at the women, that would catch thee in a bar snare, nor spend thy attentions upon some dancing woman, that has power to be thy undoing; nor let thy eyes linger on a maid uncured, whose very beauty may take thee unwares. And for harlots, let nothing tempt thee to give way to them, as life and patrimony thou boldest dear; look not round thee in the city streets, nor haunt the alley-ways. From a woman bravely decked but turn away; have no eye for her beauty that is none of thine. Woman's beauty has been the rule of many an ass, a spark to light the flames of lust. (A is better? Then trample her down like mire in thy path. The loss of a sister's virtue has been the undoing of many; a word with her, and the spark is lit.) Sit down never with a wedded wife, nor lean thy elbow upon table of lust, nor bawdy words with her over the wine; as soon as thy heart away, thy life is forfeit.

An old friend leave not; the new is not his like. New friendship, a new wine; it must ripen ere thou canst lose the taste of it.

Keep not the wrong-doer his wealth and state, beyond all expectation of thine it shall come to ruin. For his ill-gains gain have neither love nor liking; he says he will not die unquarrelled.

From one that has the power of life and death keep thy distance; as to thee shall be free from mortal shame. If dealings thou hast with a lion, keep clear of all offence, or thou shalt pay for it with thy life. Death has become thy familiar; yit-dills encompass thy path; as thou art making the rounds of a beleaguered city.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This seems to be the meaning of the Greek, although the text is perhaps corrupt. The Latin gives no good sense: "Thou wilt be walking on the weapons of piercing men."

- 21 Be at pains to avoid all neighbourhood; be wise and prudent men  
 22 thy counsellors, honour men thy guests.  
 23 In the fear of God all thy heart, the thought of God all thy thinking,  
 the commandments of the most High all the matter of thy discourse.  
 24 By skilful handiwork the artist is known, the ruler of a people by  
 the prudence of his counsel (the good sense of the aged by their  
 word spoken).  
 25 No such peer as a king as a great talker; for his such utterance, no  
 man so well heard as he.

## CHAPTER 10

- A WISE ruler, a folk well disciplined: firm the prudence as the  
 1 throne. Like king, like crown; like ruler, like sceptre. Royal  
 folly is a people's ruin; whose prudence reigns, there reigns thrice most.  
 2 God's will it is, then, that rules a nation; when the time comes, he  
 3 will give it the prince it needs. God grants prosperity whom he will;  
 divine authority is stamped on the scribe's brow.  
 4 Forget the wrong done, nor dwell thyself among the doers of it.  
 5 Praise God twice, and his bow lies on all the world's iniquities, wrong  
 and crime and outrage and treacherous shift, that he punish by  
 6 paying on the sceptre of empire into new hands; but worse sin is  
 7 none than evasion. See how man, for all his pride, is but dust and  
 8 ashes! This love of money is of all things the most pernicious; what  
 does the miser but sell his own soul? As well be howelled alive!  
 9 Why be tyrannical short-lived? Why, it is a wearisome thing to the  
 10 physician, a long illness, so he is fain to cut it short, and the king  
 11 that reigns to-day will be dead to-morrow. And what is the new  
 kingdom he inherits? Creeping things, and vermin bred, and worms.<sup>1</sup>  
 12 Pride's beginning is man's revolt from God, when the heart  
 begins its Nether; and of all sin pride is the root. Leave it, or a tempest  
 13 of blasphemy shall follow, and thou thyself be ruined at the last. De-  
 14 luded-for humiliation the Lord has in store; vanished utterly is  
 15 yonder confederacy; proud chieftains cast down, to make room for  
 16 the oppressed, proud nations withered from the root, and a humbled  
 17 race of milks planned anew! What nations of the world the Lord has  
 18 overthrown, raised them to the ground; abased and vanished away,  
 19 as they have left no trace of their passage. (The proud despisers, the

<sup>1</sup> *See 9-11.* A comparison of the Lxx with the Greek suggests that the order of these verses differed in different manuscripts of the original, and their sense cannot be accurately established. It seems likely that in vs. 11-13 the physician referred to is Providence.

humble kept in memory; such was the Lord's will.) Pride was meant, as far better, not mean; never woman bore child that had that fierce mood for its birthright.

There are two breeds of men; one fears God and wins renown, the other passes his commandments by, and is forgotten. Let chamberlain be honest & chieftain's gifts; it is humble fear wins the divine regard. For riches and renown, as for the lowly born, there is one heart worth having, the fear of God. Honest poverty never despises, nor flatters, is for all his wealth, the well-doer; prince nor ruler nor nobleman can it win any higher title than the fear of God.

Of his master's sons a prudent servant shall yet be master. Only is the fool, that is ill trained, takes punishment amiss; and a fool will never rise to greatness.

Do not boast of thy fine craftsmanship and then, in time of urgent need, stand idle! better fall to work and have a full belly than keep in thy pride and go fasting. Abate thy pride, keep body and soul together; is wise thy life as it deserves. There is no excusing the man who is in his own way, no worth in the man who thinks his life worth nothing.

One man, that little wealth has, may boast of his skill (and the fear of a God), another of his riches. Grow he rich, the poor man shall boast is indolent; grow he poor, the other has good cause to fear his poverty.

## CHAPTER II

**A** MAN may be lowly born, and yet rise high through the wisdom that is in him, till at last he takes his seat among men of mark.

Reckon no man for his good looks, nor for his outward show despise him; yonder has is an inconceivable creature, and yet there is a world of wisdom in the harvest he wins. Praise not thyself when a thou goest bravely clad, nor pride thyself in thy belief hear of greatness. Of wonder and of praise what else is worthy, but the doings of the most High? And these, how hedged about with secrecy! Kings & many have lost their thrones;<sup>1</sup> no pretenders they never dreamed of; great & once a many have fallen full low, and their glory has passed to others.

Reckon not, till thou hast heard the counsel; mark just thy reward & shall be when thou hast learnt all. Listen first, then answer, never breaking in when the tale is half told.

<sup>1</sup> This means, in view of the context, the best answer to give of a verse which is difficult in the Latin, and in the Greek almost untranslatable.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, in the Greek text, 'have set on the ground'. The Latin version, perhaps through an error, reads 'have set on their thrones'.

- 9 Quenched not, where thou thyself art not concerned; leave judgement  
of the offender to others.
- 10 Do not be entangled, my son, in too many enterprises. The rich  
man pays failure, choosing what overtake he may not, or forcing what  
he may not share.
- 11 Some men's lives are all toil and labour and anxiety, yet the more  
they toil, the less advantage they win (for want of piety). And others  
are backward folk, that cannot hold their gains, men of little power  
and much poverty; and yet such a man the Lord will look upon with  
 favour, raise him from neglect and greatly advance him, to the  
world's amusement, and the greater honour of God. From God  
all comes, good fortune and ill, life and death, poverty and riches;  
in God's keeping are wisdom and temperance and knowledge of the  
law, charity and the good life.
- 12 Sinners if blindness mislead, that blindness is censured to them;  
yet it is by making evil their delight that men grow hardened in evil.
- 13 No momentary blessing it is, God's largesse to his faithful servants;  
that seed bears an eternal crop. No such house has the mass of wealth,  
that by his own effort wins wealth. Does he tell himself that he has  
found security at last; nothing remains but to play, with his own  
earnings, his own goods? He forgets that three times, and death drives  
in, he is meant, and have all he has to another. Be true to thy  
covenant with God; its words to thy own ears repeat to thee, and  
to thy unjoined duty, hurt thyself. Wouldst thou stand there gazing  
at the deluge of sinners? Nay, trust in God, and keep to thy appointed  
task. Dost thou think God finds it hard to enrich the beggar, and  
in a moment? Swift, swift comes the blessing that rewards faithful  
service; in one short hour its fruits ripen.
- 14 Never tell thyself, need thou hast none, there is no more good can  
befall thee; never flatter thyself, thou art master of thy own lot, no  
harm can touch thee now. Rather, bethink thyself of foul weather in  
a fair, of fair weather in foul; on the very day of a man's death God  
can give him his deserts. One hour of misery, how it can efface in  
the memory long years of ease! Only a man's death-bed brings the  
full history of his fortunes to light.
- 15 Never call a man happy until he is dead; his true epitaph is written  
in his children.
- 16 Do not keep thy house open to every comer; leaves have many  
in shifts. (Foul breath lasts in a disused body); the partridge's hidden  
lure wounds, a hidden snare the doe; so those be unquiet hearts, ever on  
the watch for a neighbour's downfall, ready to interpret good things  
a snare, and cast blame on the innocent. One spark is enough to

spread a fire, and one man's treachery may be the cause of bloodshed, (such villainies as these plot against life itself). Against such a plague as be thou closely on thy guard, or it may prove thy eternal disgrace. Alas! let in is whilweltd let in, that shall alienate from thee all thou art lost.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER 12

**F**AVOUR if thou givest, look well to whom thou givest; for as shall thy favour earn abundant gratitude. A good turn done to a honest man is well rewarded; if not he, then the Lord will repay thee. It goes ill with the man who spends all his time creating the wicked, and thus gives none; does not the most High himself treat sinners as his enemies, never sparing them till they repent? (. . . For rebellious sinners he has nothing but punishment, although he may save up the day of their punishing).<sup>2</sup> Keep thy favour for the kind-hearted, and let the sinners go without their welcome. The friendless man deserves thy shame; to the godless give nothing; nay, prevent food reaching him, so he will have the misery of thee. All his gain will be doubly thy loss, and so it is that the most High both hates sinners and will bring retribution on their iniquity.

Prosperity will not show thee who are thy friends. In bad times, thy enemies may triumph openly, but all now were grieved at thy good fortune; but it is these bad times will show thee thy friends too.

Never trust an enemy; deep as verdigris on copper his malice is engrained. Let him never so low, look to it well and be on thy guard against him; never let him stand on thee, or sit at thy right hand. His eyes are on thy place; a time will come when he will sit where thou sittest, when thou wilt recognize the truth of my warning, and be stung by the remedy. Who shall ply snake-charmer or heat-ranger for the third blow? And he deserves no less, who consorts with rogues and is entangled in their sinful ways. This false friend will be thy

<sup>1</sup> vs. 21-26. The most hearing of these verses cannot be determined. In verse 21, 'simpler hearts' is literally 'pure hearts' but pride seems irrelevant to the present context, and it is likely that the original Hebrew text had 'hearts of silver' (as in verse 26). In that case the whole passage may be a warning against undue familiarity with Godless.

<sup>2</sup> At the beginning of this verse, the Lxx has the words, 'Keep thy favour for the upright, and let the sinners go without their entertainment', which appears to be a duplicate of verse 3, included by error. It has been omitted in the rendering given above, as likely disturbing to the order of the sentence. There was no doubt some dislocation of the text here; the Greek, too, has a duplicate of verse 3 immediately after verse 7.

companion for as long, then, if thou art for shunning thy course, he will not hear of it; all those honeyed words do but seek a plot to lure thee into some ditch. How he weeps for thee, this enemy of thine! Yet, if his chance comes, there will be no glancing him with thy blood; to come thou hast mischance, he is there already waiting for thee. How he weeps for thee, this enemy of thine! If he makes to aid thee, it is only to trip thy foot; then what stepping and moving, what clapping of the hands and whispering, what a change of mind!

## CHAPTER 13

WHO handles pitch, with pitch is defiled; who dwells in his lot with insolence, of insolence shall have his fill. A heavy burden thou art shouldering, if thou wouldst consort with thy betters, not for their sake the company of the rich. For and kettles are ill matched; it is the pot breaks when they come together; wealth has more than its share, and must be fretting still, while poverty suffers in silence. If thou hast friends to be sure, thy rich friend will make use of thee; if none, he bids thee farewell. thy guest, he will eat up all thou hast to give, and have no pity to waste on thee. His he need of thee? Then, to be sure, he will ply his wit, all smiles and fair speeches, and eagerness to know what thy need is; he remembers thee, now, with hospitality. So, twice and three times, he will drain thee dry; then he will turn on thee with a laugh, and if he meets thee again, it will be to pass thee by with a nod of the head.

(Learn to abase thyself before God, and wait for his hand to bestow on thee), instead of courting false hopes, that bring their own abatement.

(For all thy wisdom, do not hold thyself too cheap, or thou wilt lower thyself the fool's way.) If a great man bids thee come close, keep thy distance; he will but bid thee the same; do not count a rebuff by wearing him, nor yet withdraw altogether, and be forgotten. Affliction though he should be, treat him never familiarly; all his friendly talk is but a lure to drag thy secrets out of thee. All that thou report his pitiless heart will hold against thee; never a blow, never a chain the wiser. Have a care of thyself, give good heed to this warning, then or that walkest with rain over at thy side. (wake from sleep at the brooding of it, and see thy peril. Love God all thy days, and pray that he will send thee good deliverance).

Every hear consorts with its own kind, and shall not man with his fellow? Like to like is nature's rule, and for man like to like is still the best partnership; as well march wolf with lamb as roger with

beast live. Consumed person<sup>1</sup> and prowling dog, what have they in common? And what fellowship can there be between rich man and poor? Poor man is so rich as wild ass is so lion out in the desert, his is prey; wealth hides poverty, as the peacock hides humble rank. To Tempt the lordly house, it has friends to ruin it; the poor man in his ruin is driven from shelter down. Trips the rich man, he has a curry to keep him in countenance; his teacher with hands acquittal; trips the poor man, he is called to account for it; even for what he is said to the purpose, no allowance is made him. Speaks the rich man, as all must listen in silence, and afterwards eases his conscience to the sleep; speaks the poor man, Why, say all, who is this? And if his words offend, it is the undoing of him.

Yea, where there is no sin to stain a man's conscience, a fall purse is a blessing, and poverty itself is a great evil when it goes with a blasphemer's mouth.<sup>2</sup> Heart of man changes his mind, for good or ill, but where that pleasant mind is, that comes of a generous heart, is no short or easy way there is to discover.<sup>3</sup>

## CHAPTER 14

**BLESSED** the man whose lips have never betrayed him into a fault, who has never known the sting of remorse, never felt conscience condemning him, and the hope he lived by, his no more!

Vain is this; save the minor charities; wasted on his discontented ear, the bright gold! See how he wrongs himself as heard up; goads the others; so let his hairs keep high reel when he is good! Whom friend is he, that is his own enemy, and leaves his own cheer unshared? This is the best villainy of all, that a man should grudge himself his own happiness; in punishment for his poverty of soul that never did good except by oversight, and so his manifest remorse! A diseased eye has the signal, that will turn away and let hunger go unsatisfied; and for the covetous man, he has an eye that ever sees his own share less, all his very nature dies up from continual pinning. An eye bandaged with its own passions, and never a full meal, but always be more sit hungry and pensive at his own table!

<sup>1</sup> Or perhaps 'silly person'. The Greek text has, 'wren'.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'in the mouth of a sinner'. This would naturally be interpreted as meaning 'in the estimation of a sinner', but such a meaning would give no parallel of thought between the two halves of the verse.

<sup>3</sup> Or possibly the point is that it is difficult to find instances of the pleasant mind that results from a generous heart, because they are so rare. If so, the first two verses of ch. 14 should be taken as part of this chapter.

11 My son, if wealth thou hast, eat well, and make thy offering to God  
 12 proportionable. Rejoice that thou shalt death wait not; there is no part-  
 13 ing off thy spirit with the grave; nothing in this world, but its death-  
 14 warrant is out already. While life still holds, make thy friends good  
 15 to thee, and to the poor be open-handed as thy means allow thee. *Wise-  
 16 men* eat the fruit, nor thy spirit put by of the blessings gained thee;  
 17 woe that thou have thy heirs wrangling over the fruits of thy house  
 18 is ill? Much give, much take, eat thy seed at ease; while life still  
 19 holds, do thy duty of almsgiving; fasting thou shalt be wont in the  
 20 grave. No living thing but fades in the grass field, as the leaves fade  
 21 on a growing tree, some sprouting fresh and some a-dying as it is  
 22 with death and blood, new generation makes room for the next. All  
 23 the works of man are fugitive, and some perish soon or late, and he,  
 24 the workman, goes the same way as the rest. (Yet shall their chosen  
 25 works win favour, and in his work he, the workman, shall live.)  
 26 Blessed the man that dwells on wise thoughts, making how to  
 27 acquit himself well, and remembering the all-seeing eye of God; that  
 28 can plan out in his heart all wisdom's twists and turns, fathom her  
 29 secret life as spy he follows her, and lingers in her tracks, peeps  
 30 through her window, listens at her door. By her house takes up his  
 31 shade, driving his sail into the walls of it, so as to build his cabin at  
 32 her very side, cabin that shall remain for ever a house of blessing;  
 33 Wisdom shall be the shade under which his children find their  
 34 appointed resting-place; her spreading boughs shall protect them  
 35 from the noon-day heat; wisdom shall be the monument of his glorious  
 36 report.

## CHAPTER 15

1 **I**F a man fears the Lord, he will live an upright life. If a man holds fast  
 2 to innocence, he will find wisdom ready to his embrace, welcom-  
 3 ing him as a mother welcomes the son, wise disciplines her, greeting  
 4 him like a maiden bride. Long life and good discernment are the  
 5 bread this mother will provide for him, truth the refreshing draught  
 6 she will give him to drink. She will take firm hold of him, so that he  
 7 never wavers, restrain him, so that he is never disgraced. She will  
 8 raise him to high repute among his neighbours; she will move him to  
 9 speak before the assembled people (filling him with the spirit of  
 10 wisdom and discernment, clothing him in magnificent array). Joy  
 11 and triumph she has in store for him, and will enrich him with a name

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'will find her'. Grammatically, this might refer to 'innocence', but it is fairly certain we are meant to think of Wisdom, alluded to in 14. 26 as above.



that shall never be forgotten. Not for the fools her wisdom, only a apt pupils encounter her; how should the fools catch sight of her, that is so far removed from proud and treacherous ways? Nay, she is beyond the fool's eye's ken; (wise hearts alone are her company, and these shall profit by it till they are fit for God's schooling). Praise is a true praise deformed when it is uttered by the lips of a sinner; wisdom is wisdom from God only, and of this divine gift praise must ever be in the back and call. Praise on the lips of one who trusts God is akin in meaning the Father of all inspires it.

This wisdom lacketh thee;<sup>2</sup> Do not blame God for the want of it; it seems to show thy deeds God hath. Do not complain that it was he it led thee into false paths; what need has God, thickest thou, of *show*? No fool mislead there is but God leads it; there is no leading it is and leading him. When men first came to be, it was God made it them, and, making them, left them to the arbitrament of their own will; yet giving them commandments to be their rule. These commandments if thou wilt observe, they in their turn shall preserve thee, and give thee witness of his favour.<sup>3</sup> It is as though he offered a thee life and woe, bidding thee take which thou wouldst; life and a death, blessing and curse, man stands set before him, and the gift gives that shall be the choice thou makest; so wise God is, so considering his power, so innocent the watch he keeps over mankind. The Lord's eye is watching over the man who fears him, so set of man passes unobserved; upon none does he withhold disobedience, none a has leave from him to commit sin. (A brood of disloyal men and a worthless, how should this be the Lord's desire?)

## CHAPTER 16

A BROOD of disloyal men, let not thy eye dwell on those with pleasure, the fear of God lacking, let not the multitude of them be thy consolation. Not on such lives as these set thy hopes, little regard have thou for such doings as theirs; better one man who fears God than a thousand who grow up rebellious; better die children than have others to witness that. Through one man that is well-minded a whole country may thrive, and of sinners a whole race may be extinguished; much proof of this my own eyes have seen, and

<sup>2</sup> "This wisdom lacketh thee" according to the Greek text, "thou dost not know wisdom."

<sup>3</sup> The concluding given there is an attempt to combine the Greek and the Latin versions, either of which, taken by itself, is untranslatable.

1 stronger proof yet are the tales that have come to my hearing, of the  
 breaking out when sinners were met in company, from of vengeance  
 2 to consume a disobedient race. These old giants who perished in  
 the pride of their strength, did they find means for the pardon of their  
 3 guilt? Let's neighbours, did God spare them? Did he not smite his  
 4 hatred of their wickedness, destroying a whole nation without pity,  
 5 for the sinfulness that defiled him? And what of those six hundred  
 thousands that marched out into the desert, men of stubborn heart?  
 6 Suff'ered if he had been like the others, Calah himself should not  
 7 have had God's pardon.<sup>1</sup> His to pity, his to grant; impenitent souls  
 8 with him, but in full blood comes his vengeance: his severity, no less  
 9 than his clemency, judges men by their deeds. Never may sinners  
 10 enjoy his ill-gotten gains in safety, nor the hope of the generous be  
 11 disappointed. No generous act but shall win God's consideration;  
 he weighs each man's merits, knows how each passed his time on  
 earth.

12 Never think to hide thyself away from God; never tell thyself, from  
 13 that great height none shall regard thee; that thou wilt pass unnoticed  
 14 amidst the throng of humanity, thy soul a mere speck in the vast  
 15 fabric of creation. Why, the very heavens, and the heavens that see  
 16 above the heavens, the great deep, and the whole earth with all in  
 17 it contains, shrink away at the sight of him; mountains and hills and  
 18 earth's foundations tremble at his glance; all these have a heart,  
 19 though it be a heart void of reason<sup>2</sup> (and there is no heart but its  
 20 secrets are known to him). There is no fathoming his ways, no  
 21 piercing the dark cloud men's eyes have never seen: all but a few of  
 his doings are hidden away. His acts of retribution<sup>3</sup> who can under-  
 stand, or who can bear? For, the reward is that reward of his (from  
 22 among men's thoughts; and yet in the end all shall undergo his  
 23 scrutiny).<sup>4</sup> Away with these fancies of shallow minds, these fond  
 dreams of error!

<sup>1</sup> The words 'into the desert' have been inserted to make it clear that the  
 Enoch is alluded to; they are not in the text. Nor is the name 'Calah', but the  
 grammar of the Latin version necessarily implies that one person was accepted  
 from the general doom, cf. Num. 14, 24 and elsewhere. The Greek text has,  
 'And if there is one stiff-necked person, it is a marvel if he escapes'.

<sup>2</sup> 'All these have a heart, though it be a heart void of reason' or perhaps, 'and  
 in all these matters, the Eternal heart is precluded to reason', which is the sense  
 of the Greek text.

<sup>3</sup> The sense of the Greek text is probably rather 'the acts which will be  
 approved'.

<sup>4</sup> 22, 23-25 In the Latin version, this is apparently regarded as an allusion  
 to the prophecies mentioned in vs. 22, 23, in the Greek text, it seems to be a  
 condemnation of them, the answer being delayed till verse 24.

With thee but looks to me, my son, thou shalt learn a wiser lesson. 1  
 Give me thy heart's bending, and instruction thou shalt have in full 2  
 measure (wisdom both profound and deep. Give me thy heart's  
 bending, and thou shalt share with me knowledge of the wonderful  
 covenants God gave his messengers when first he made them; all  
 the love I have shall be truly sold thee. From the first, all God's 3  
 messengers are at his beck and call; so each, when he first made it, he  
 gave his own turn of service, the power of motion that belonged to his  
 own nature. To each, for all time, his own office is assigned, nor 4  
 lack they, nor tire they, nor cease they from work, nor, for all time, is  
 any any of them infringe upon his neighbour's rights; his word there is  
 in no gainsaying.<sup>1</sup> This done, no earth be let fill his regard, and so  
 filled earth with his blessings; covered the face of it<sup>2</sup> with the living 5  
 things that breathe there, and late its bosoms bade them return.

## CHAPTER 17

**M**AN, too, God created out of the earth (fashioning him after his 1  
 loved likeness), and gave him, too, earth to be his burying-place 2  
 (for all the desires pervers that clarked him); man, too, should have 3  
 his allotted toll of years, his seasons of maturity, and should have  
 power over all else on earth; no living thing, beast or bird, that should 4  
 not fear him and be subject to his rule. To him (and to that partner 5  
 of his, created like himself and out of himself), God gave will and  
 speech and sight and hearing; gave them a heart to reason with, and  
 filled them with power of discernment; (spirit itself should be within 6  
 their two, their hearts should be all supple). What evil was, what  
 good, he made plain to them; gave them his own eyes to see with, so 7  
 that they should keep his marvellous acts in view, praise that holy 8  
 name of his, boast of his wisdom, tell the story of his renowned  
 deeds. Warnings, too, he gave them; the law that brings life should 9  
 be a cherished heirloom; and so he made a covenant with them which  
 should last for ever; claim and award of his he would make known 10  
 to them. Their eyes should see him in visible majesty, their ears 11  
 catch the echo of his majestic voice. Keep your hands clean, he told  
 them, of all wrong-doing, and give each man a duty towards his 12  
 neighbour.

<sup>1</sup> That is, according to the Greek text, the forces of nature are bound to obey it; the Latin version represents it as a warning against human disobedience.

<sup>2</sup> This is the meaning of the Greek text. The Latin version has *Manusum* before the face of it, which yields no satisfactory sense.

- 11 Ever before his eyes their doings are; nothing is hidden from his  
 12 scrutiny. To every creature people he has given a ruler of its own;  
 13 Israel alone is exempt, marked down as God's property. Clear as  
 the sun their sins show under his eye; ever their lives, outliving his  
 14 scrutiny. Sin they as they will, his covenant is still on record; no  
 misdeed of theirs but he is the witness of it.  
 15 Alas if thou givest, thou hast the sign-manual of his favour;  
 measured to the apple of his eye is the record of man's deserving.<sup>1</sup>  
 16 . . . A day will come when he counts himself and requites them,  
 one by one, for their misdoing (overwhelms them in the depths of  
 17 earth). Yet, so much as repents, he grants the means of acquittal, and  
 makes their sinning hearts strong to endure; (for there, too, he has a  
 18 share in his promised reward). Turn back to the Lord, and let thy  
 19 sins be; a suppliant before him, thou mayest rob the cause of its  
 20 flimsy. Come back to the Lord, from wrong-doing turn away, and  
 21 thy feet shall be set; (in all his decrees and search sees God just,  
 stand in thy appointed place to make intercession to him, the most  
 22 High), and take thy part with a race of men justified, living men  
 23 that still give thanks to God.<sup>2</sup> (Tinger not in the false path of  
 wickedness; give thanks while breath is in thee); the dead breathe no  
 24 more, give thanks no more. Thanks while yet thou livest, thanks  
 while health and strength are still with thee, to praise God and to take  
 25 pride in all his mercies! The Lord's mercy, that is so abundant,  
 the pardon that is ever theirs who come back to him!  
 26 Think not man is the centre of all things;<sup>3</sup> no man of Adam is im-  
 27 mortal, for all the delight they take in their sinful follies. Naught  
 brighter than the sun, and yet its brightness shall fall; naught darker  
 than the secret designs of flesh and blood, yet all shall come to light.  
 28 God, that marshals the armies of high heaven, and man, all dust and  
 ash!

<sup>1</sup> It seems possible that this verse has been misplaced, since it breaks into the connection of thought between verse 11 and verse 12.

<sup>2</sup> *ms. 44, 45* The Luthi have made very unaccountably, and is perhaps the rendering of a corrupt Hebrew original. In the first half of verse 23, the Greek text has, 'Who will give praise to the most High in the grave?' The word rendered 'give thanks', here and in the following verses, may also, according to Hebrew usage, mean 'endure', (*see* *ib. 34, 35*).

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'It is not possible that all things should be in man'.

## CHAPTER 18

**N**AUGHT *is* is, but God made it; he, the creator of all right, the king that reigns for ever unchangeable. And wouldst thou tell the number of his creatures, trace his marvellous doings to their origin, set forth in words the greatness of his power, or go further yet, and proclaim his marvels? God's wonders thou shalt learn to understand, when thou hast learned to increase the number of them, or diminish it. Reach thou the end of thy reckoning, thou must needs begin again: cease thou from wisdom, thou hast nothing learnt. Tell me, what is man, what worth is his, what things are they that are born and born to him? What is his span of life? Like a drop in the ocean, like a bubble on the beach, seems those few years of his, a hundred at the most marked with eternity. What wonder if God is patient with his human creatures, lurches mercy on them? (If none made, as he, their proud heart,) none knows, as he, the cruelty of their doom; and so he has given his clemency full play, and showed it them as even such to need. Man's mercy extends only to his neighbour; God has pity on all living things. He is like a shepherd who is care for his sheep, guides and controls all alike; welcome thou this a merciful discipline of his, run thou eagerly to meet his will, and he will show pity on thee.

My son, bestow thy favour ungrudgingly, nor ever rear with hands words the gladness of thy giving. Not more welcome the deer, nor is purer the ear's beat, than the giver's word, that craves for more than the gift. Better the gracious word than the gracious gift; but, wouldst or thou acquit thyself perfectly, be both to thine. Folly must be killing or still; never yet did eye brighten over a cheat's giving.

First arm thyself with a just cause, then stand thy trial; first learn, is done speak. Steady thy health before ever thou fallst sick, and thy own heart examines before judgement overtakes thee, so in God's sight thou shalt find pardon. While health serves thee, do penance for thy sin, and then, when sickness comes, show thyself the man thou art.<sup>1</sup> From paying thy vows<sup>2</sup> let naught ever hinder thee; shall death or find thee wilt shunning from acquitting thyself of the task? (God's sword made for ever.) And before ever thou makest thy petition, or

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'show thy conversion', or perhaps, 'show thy conversion'—the point is the same in either case. The Greek has, 'show thy conversion at the time of transgression'; it is not clear in what sense.

<sup>2</sup> The Latin has simply 'paying', but this misses the emphasis of the saying, this paragraph being evidently concerned with getting things done in good time.

- count well the cost.<sup>1</sup> Let it not be said of thee that thou didst defy  
 10 God's anger. When his vengeance is satisfied, bethink thee of his  
 vengeance still; of his satisfaction, when his glory is turned away.<sup>2</sup>  
 11 When all abounds, bethink thee of evil times; of pinching poverty,  
 12 when thou hast wealth in store. Between thee and us of men the face  
 13 of things shows; verily God changes all; and he is whose who walks  
 14 timorously, shunning carelessness in a world where sin abounds.  
 15 They are well advised that master wisdom's secret, much cause for  
 16 thankfulness she bestows on him who finds her. Wise man that has  
 the gift of utterance does more than wisely live; (no stranger to truth  
 and right, he is a fountain of true sayings and of right words.  
 17 Do not follow the counsel of appetite; turn thy back on thy own  
 18 liking. Temper these passions of thine, and joy it will bring, but so  
 19 thy enemies. Love not the crooked, though it be with poor men;  
 20 they will be trying will use with another in watchfulness. And  
 wouldst thou give poor with borrowing to pay thy debt, thou wilt  
 thy empty coffers? That were to gudge thy own life.

## CHAPTER 19

- LET him tell as he will, the son's part is empty; little things  
 1 : Lilies, and lilies by little thou shalt come to ruin. Wine and  
 2 woman, a trap for the loyalty of the wise, the weakness of good  
 3 men! He will go from bad to worse, that clings to a harlot's love;  
 4 waste and want shall have him for their prey, one glibber the more,  
 5 one living and the less.  
 6 Rush hence that lightly trusts shall lose all faster thy own right to  
 7 live, and none will pay thee. (A find him it is, to take pride in wrong-  
 8 doing; a covering of death, to despise reproach, a readiness of mouth  
 9 mischievous, to forever chattering. Who forforn his own right to live,  
 10 will live to rue it; who loves croaking, bleats his own name.)

<sup>1</sup> Literally "prepare thy mind" for the satisfaction of the man with which the passion was accompanied.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, this verse reads "Remember anger in the day of the end, and a time of retribution in the turning of the face". It is ordinarily interpreted as meaning, "Remember the anger (which God will show) at the end of the world (or, at the time of the death), and the time of retribution (which will reward) in the turning away of his face". But it is surely inevitable that verse 14 should have exactly the same grammatical appearance as verse 15, and yet a totally different grammatical construction. Now in God is said to "turn away his face" when he punishes men, here, on the contrary, when he comes to "look the right way" and leaves them unpunished; cf. Ps. 9 (9). 11.

Melicious word if thou hear or hearst, do not repeat it; never wilt thou be the loser. Speak not out thy own thoughts for friend and foe to hate alike, nor ever, if thou hast done wrong, discover the secret. He that knows it will be on his guard, and eye thee sideways, as if to even brook fault of thine; such will be all his demeanour to thee thereafter.<sup>1</sup> Hast thou heard a tale to thy neighbour's disadvantage? Take it to the grave with thee. Courage, men! it will not hurt them. A man fed with a secret labours as with chaff, and grows till he is delivered of it; yet it must come, like an arrow stuck in a man's thigh, from a scarred heart.

Confront thy friend with his fault; it may be he knows nothing of it the matter, and can clear himself; if not, there is hope he will amend. Confront him with the word spoken aside; it may be, he never said it, as if say it he did, never again will he repeat it. Be open with thy friend; tongues will still be clattering,<sup>2</sup> and then dost well believe is less than is told thee. Slippe there are of the tongues when mind is inward; what tongues was ever perfectly guarded? Confront thy neighbour with his fault as thou quarrellest with him, and let the fear of the most High God do its work.

What is true wisdom? Nothing but the fear of God. And since the fear of God is contained in it, all true wisdom must be directed by his law: wisdom is none in following the maxims of impiety; prudence is in none in scheming to the wicked scheme. Cunning requires they may be, put altogether abominable; a fool he must ever be called, that lacks the true wisdom.<sup>3</sup> Better a simpleton that wit has none, yet a known foe, than a man of great address, that lacks the fear of the most High. It is one thing to be stout and adroit, another thing to utter the plain word that tells the whole truth. There is one that is worn the garb of penance for wicked ends, his heart full of guile; here is one that bows and scrapes, and walks with bent head, striving none to see what is best left aside, and all because he is powerless to do that is

<sup>1</sup> *ec. 8, 9* The sense of the Greek text is: 'Do not tell tales about friend or foe, being foolish to light, unless it were so as that (to keep silent). Friend or foe will hear of it, and will keep thee under his eye, waiting for the opportunity to show his hatred of thee'.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'for often there is whispering', i.e., in the setting of accounts; the next word is used by the Latin version as to *ss. 32* above. The Greek text has, 'where there is slander'.

<sup>3</sup> The first half of this verse was, both in the Greek and in the Latin, 'There is a wickedness [i.e., worldliness], and it is an abomination'; a phrase which means both and does not suit the context. Evidently the Hebrew original contained some word which might be interpreted either as 'prudence' or as 'wickedness'; e.g., the word used in the former sense by Prov. 1. 4, and in the latter sense by Job. 11. 23.

- is a haunt; if the chance of victory comes, he will take it. For a man's looks betray him; a man of good sense will make himself known to others at first meeting: the clothes he wears, the smile on his lips, his gait, will all make those acquainted with a man's character.
- is Repeated there is that no good brings, as the verse shows; the substantial reproach that anger prompts in a quarrel. And a man may show prudence by holding his tongue.

## CHAPTER 30

- B**BETTER the complaint made than the grudge secretly nursed.
- When a man confesses his fault, do not set him down in cold judgement.
- Redress<sup>1</sup> sought by violence no more content shall bring thee than counsel's lust for mind.
- Well it is to be reproved, and to confess thy fault, and be rid of all such guilt as thou hast incurred knowingly.
- A man may be the wiser for remaining dumb, where the gift rather agrows weakness; the silent man, has he nothing to say? Or is he waiting for the right time to say so? Wisdom keeps its utterance in a reserve, where the fool's vanity cannot wait. The babbler cuts his own throat; claims more than thy right, and all men are thy enemies.
- For a word ill timed, success is failure, winning is losing. Gift is given may bring thee nothing in return, or worse its worth. Honour is achieved may belittle a man, and modesty bring him renown. What use to make a good bargain, if thou must pay for it sevenfold?
- Word of wise men endears him; the fool spends his treasures in vain.
- Little will the fool's gift profit thee; seven times repaid is all he is worth.<sup>2</sup> The paltrier the gift, the longer the admonitions that go with it, and every word of his an incitement to anger. Out upon the man who lends to-day, and will have the loan returned to-morrow! The fool has no friends, nor can win love by all his favouring: they are his parasites that sit at his table; long and long they will laugh over him as he injudiciously he bestows gifts worth having, and gifts nothing worth.

<sup>1</sup> The Latin version substitutes 'like sword' for 'redress', but it is doubtful whether this interpretation improves the sense of a passage already obscure.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'his eyes are sevenfold', a phrase which is sometimes understood as meaning that he expects a sevenfold return for his gift. But this meaning does not seem to be borne out either by usage or by the context, which emphasises only the self-importance of the donor given. But it must be admitted that the interpretation of this whole paragraph cannot be reached with certainty.



Slip of a liar's tongue is like slip from roof to ground; a villain's a red in not long a-coming.

An ungracious man is no more set by than some idle tale that is a snare on the lips of the ill-fated.

No weighty saying but offends in a liar's mouth; were it that he will bring it out unseasonably.

Some avoid wrong only because they lack the means to do it; like is they remain, yet conscience-stricken.<sup>1</sup>

Some for very shame have covered their own ruin, resolved, though in that opinion were worthless enough, to mortify themselves for another's good opinion. Some, too, for shame, make their friends high-sounding promises, and thereby gain nothing, but lose a friend.

A lie is a lead blot upon a man's name, yet nothing so frequent on ill-guarded lips. Worse than a thief is one who is ever lying, and so to be better not may be lost forever. He lives without honour that lies without scruple, and shame is at his side continually.

The wise word brings a man to honour; prudence will make thee so to the great. Till proved, and till seen (live uprightly, and attain a honest) win praise, and thus harm.

Hospitality here, a gift there, how they blind the eyes of justice! With these, though thy lips be dumb, thou mayst escape censure.<sup>2</sup>

Whom hollow is wanted, is treasure that never sees the light of a day; silence is rightly used when it marks folly, not when it is the sign of wisdom.

## CHAPTER 21

**STINGED** if thou hast, my son, be not emboldened to sin further; no Sympson betide thee, and affect the memory of his past. Sin dread thou not less than the serpent's encounter; its fangs will not ruin thee, if once thou come close. Teeth so sharp no lion ever had, to catch a human prey, nor ever two-edged sword gave wound as incurable as the law's delation. Sometimes and opposite the post, thy own wealth shall divide; riches that are gotten too great the proud cannot long enjoy; pride starveth wealth. Swiftly comes their doom, because the poor man's plot caught their own, but never their fears.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'he will be conscience-stricken in his report'. The Greek means a *reproach*.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek gives a different sense in the second half of the verse, 'so better pay to silence opposed'.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'The plot of the poor man will come from the mouth as fit as his eye'. Some interpret this as denoting the aim of divine justice, but there is no hint of this in the text.

- 7 Where reproof is unregarded, there goes the sinner; no God-fearing man but will pass his own conscience under review.
- 8 To the gift speaks, fame comes from far and wide; only the wise man knows the slips of his own heart.
- 9 Wouldst thou build thy fortunes on earnings that are none of thine? As well mightest thou lay a stone for winter fuel.
- 10 When heavens come together, it is like heaping up snow; the flame burns all the brighter.
- 11 How smoothly paved is the path of sinners! Yet death lies at the end of it, and darkness, and doom.
- 12 If thou wouldst be master of thy own thought, first keep the law: no wisdom or discernment but is the fruit of God's law. Without discernment there will never advance in the school of virtue; yet discernment there is that breeds abundance of mischief; where the stream runs foul, there can be no righteousness of mind. Where true wisdom is, there discernment flows in full tide, there prudent springs up, an indispensable fountain of life.
- 13 Heart of fool is looking back, that looms all the wisdom it leaves. Truths that wisdom will prize and cherish, the prodigal hears no less, as but hearing displeas, and casts them to the winds. Listening to a fool is like journeying with a heavy pack; there is no gleaming the air, as where wiser is none. How they hang on the lips of a wise man, the fool resembles, ay, and pounds in their hearts over the word said. A fool takes counsel as wine talk as a man who stumbles in a reid moving as without sense, that cannot abide strategy. To the fool, instruction is none but a fetter to clog him, gives that clogg his wits. A fool is laugh to loud, smiling, the wise compare their lips. Foolish as an ornament of gold, clasp-firing as a bracelet to the right arm, is an instruction to a wise man. Folly sees him over every threshold, where is the experienced mind stands, as in a royal presence, shrank; folly is peep in at windows, where experience waits patiently without; leaves thoughtlessly behind open doors, where prudence hangs back for as very shame.<sup>1</sup> Fools break out into rash utterance, where the prudent is set at pains to weigh their words; with the one, to think is to speak, with the other, to speak is to think.
- 14 Let the sinner come the fool heed that speaks him,<sup>2</sup> so his own hand as the curse shall reveal. The tale-bearer is his own enemy, shamed by

<sup>1</sup> In the Latin version, 'windows', in the Greek text, 'windows'; cf. note on 19. 25.

<sup>2</sup> vs. 32-37. These verses are usually understood as an introduction to the charges of public censure. It is more probable that the second author is denouncing, under a metaphor, the habit of rash speech.

<sup>3</sup> "The fool himself" may, in the Hebrew text, have meant simply 'his enemy'.

all, court his friendship, and there wilt court hatred; that lye and wise judgement shall bring thee a good name.

## CHAPTER 31

WHAT if names shall we hurt in the sluggard? Scorn from the wiser, that has no man's good word; dung from the middens, for all to wish their hands of him.

Spill not thou shalt begin to thy shame, spill'st laughter to thy great loss; bring thee to her husband no dowry of modesty, her shame shall not thee do. Shame the father shall have, shame the justness; if company for shame, he will have no good word from either of these.

Speech may be out of season, like music in time of mourning; not so the red, not so charitament; there lies ever wisdom.<sup>1</sup> Touch a fool, and cast a pet with glory; better audience thou shalt have from the sleeper than wouldst awake from a deep dream; thy speech ended, 'Woe, what's to do?' ask fool and dreamer alike.

For the dead does lack light, for the fool that lacks wit, never cease to mourn; yet not for the dead overmuch, since wit is his, but the fool's life is empty beyond the emptiness of death; seven days the dead are mourned, but the fool, the godless fool, all his life long.

Linger never with a fool in talk, nor ever in thy lot with him; keep a clear of him, as thou wouldst keep clear of mischief, and of sin's pollution; go thy way, and let him go his; thou shalt sleep the sounder, as for having no folly of his to cloud thy spirit. Naught like lead for a heaviness? Ay, but its name is fool. With sand or ash or iron burn a burden thyself, not with ruck and godless company, not with a fool.

The far the foundations with timber bolts, thy house shall wigh; so stand all shock; nor less shall he, whose heart stands rooted in the cressets of profecy; no house of fools can daunt that steadfast heart. As Palisade set on high ground, with no better protection against the wind's fury than cheap rubble, is but of short endurance; faint heart as that thinks a fool's thoughts will not be proof against sudden terror. Faint heart that thinks a fool's thoughts . . .

. . . shall never be afraid; no more shall he, that still keeps true to God's commandments.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The use of words in this verse is very strained, and it is likely that the Hebrew text was corrupt.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek text here has, 'What is it?' The Latin version ('Quid est?') would apply to the sleeper, but gives no satisfactory sense as applied to the fool.

<sup>3</sup> The Latin text here is obviously confused, and perhaps defective.

- 29 Char'd eye will weep, char'd heart will show discontent. One  
 since hung, and the birds are all on the wings are bent return'd, and  
 30 the friendship is past repair. That thou dar'st sword against thy  
 31 friend? Be confam'd, all may be as it was. Hast thou needed  
 him with angry words? These may yet be reconcil'd. But the tongue,  
 the contumacious reproach, the secret betrayed, the covert attack,  
 all these make a friend lost.  
 32 Keep faith with a friend when his power is empty, then shalt have  
 33 joy of his good fortune: stand by him when he falls upon evil times,  
 thou shalt be partner in his prosperity.  
 34 Chimney-sweep and wimple ring, of fire forewarn them, nurse  
 offend, and thence, and hence, of bloodshed.  
 35 Never will I be ashamed to great friend of mine, never deny myself  
 to him; let him befall me for his sake, I care not.  
 36 . . . All that hear of it will keep their distance from him.<sup>1</sup>  
 37 Oh for a century to guard this mouth of mine, a seal to keep these  
 lips inviolate! Were I but safe from that snare, might but my tongue  
 never betray me!

## CHAPTER 23

- LORD, that govern my life and guidest it, never may these lips of  
 mine have me at their mercy, never let them betray me into a fall  
 1 Be my thoughts ever under the lock, my heart disciplin'd by true  
 wisdom; let it never deal gently with their unwitting offences, or gloss  
 2 o'er the wrong they do! What if my misgivings should go, all  
 unobserved, from bad to worse, if I should grow hardened in wrong-  
 doing, and add fault to fault? What humiliation were this, in full view  
 3 of my enemies; how would my ill-wishers triumph at the sight? Lord,  
 that govern my life and guidest it (let them not have me at their mercy);  
 4 never let hungry looks be mine, never the results of passion come  
 5 near me. Let the lock of glory pass me by, nor ever earned lust  
 overtake me; do not leave me, Lord, at the mercy of a shameless, an  
 unprofitable mind.  
 6 Bless is the hand, my eyes, of the tongue's use; hold fast by it, and  
 7 thy own lips shall never be thy undoing. What is it but his lying that  
 utters the shames, what assure but their own speech catches the  
 8 proud, the shameless? That mouth of thine do not leave to out-  
 witting; therein lie many perils; wilt thou take God's name often on

<sup>1</sup> *See* 31, 32. It is impossible to make these verses form a continuous sentence: to render 'let him befall me through his agency' is a misrepresentation of the Greek. There has perhaps been an omission in the text.

thy lips, and blind thyself by invocation of the holy name, thy word is faithful to them. Shew that is *over* under the high covert escape; without brushes in the end; thy silent revenging, thy often revenging, shall lead thee into guilt at last. Once a man, *that* a *thing*; punish-<sup>1</sup>ment shall be still at thy doom. Forswear thyself, thou shalt be held to account for it; forget the oath, it is at thy double peril; and though it were lightly taken, thou shalt find no excuse in that; plague shall light on all thou hast, in vengeance for it.

Six of speech there is, one, that has death for its counterpart; God is said it be not found in Jacob's chosen men;<sup>2</sup> from men of tender conscience every such thought is far away, not theirs to willow in evil-doing.

Power of habituating thy tongue to lewd talk; charade is matter of offence.

Treat not father and mother with disregard. There are great ones in all among thee; what if thyself God should disregard, when thou art arraigned before them? Then shall this ill custom of thine strike thee dumb<sup>3</sup> and bring thee to great dishonour, thou wilt wish thou hadst never been, and rue the day of thy birth.

Let a man grow into a habit of railing speech, all his days there is no redeeming him.

Two sorts of men are sinners above measure, and a third I can name is that calls down vengeance. There is a hot temper, all fire and fury, is that cannot die down till it has had its fill. A man that is corrupted by the presuming of his own heat<sup>4</sup> will not be content until it bursts into flame. To the furnace, one pasture-ground is as good as another; there is no wearying him till he has tried all. Out on the man even that takes his life in his hands and comes between another's sword! There is none to witness it, thinks he; darkness all about, is and wills to shorten me, and none watching; what have I to fear? Of sin like mine the most High lets the record pass. Of that all-seeing eye no head man; his fear of a man has driven the fear of God from his thoughts; of human eyes only he shuns the sight.<sup>5</sup> What, art a

<sup>1</sup> There can be little doubt that the reference is to blasphemy (see Lev. xxiv. 16).

<sup>2</sup> What if thyself God should disregard, when thou art arraigned before them? Then shall this ill custom of thine strike thee dumb; thereby, 'Last by chance God should forget thee (in the threat, thou shouldst forget) in their presence, and be made foolish by thy habit'. It is difficult to be certain either of the exact meaning of the passage, or of its reference to the context.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'by the incense of his heat'; it would be rather to understand what are the three sins mentioned in verse 10, if we could suppose that the Hebrew text intended, in verse 10, the sin of gluttony (cf. verse 8 above).

<sup>4</sup> The Latin version, evidently by an error, gives at the end of the verse 'the eyes of men fear him', instead of 'the eyes of men frighten him'.

not God's eyes a thousand times more piercing than the sea's eye?  
 Do they not watch all the doings of men (the depths of earth, and man's  
 heart), every secret open to their scrutiny? God, that knows all he  
 means to make, does he not watch over all he has made?  
 In full view of the open street the adulteress shall pay the penalty;  
 found, as for a runaway horse, the lion and cry; where he thought to  
 escape, justice overtakes him. (All the world shall witness his shame,  
 that left the fear of the Lord unregarded.) Not less guilty is she who  
 plays her husband false, giving him for heir a child that is an eye of  
 his. Broken, the law of the most High; her plighted troth forgotten,  
 has she not darker played the warden, than heave won to a punishment?  
 Needs must the confound the folk assembled, nor shall those sons of  
 whom he spared, such sons must not surpass, such heights never  
 shall reach; she leaves but the memory of an accursed name, a name  
 for ever dishonoured. Warning she gives to after ages that God's  
 fear is best, nor sweetest let it say than the divine law well observed.  
 Follow the Lord, and it shall be thy reward, a long life is the reward  
 it shall bring thee.)

## CHAPTER 24

**H**EAR now how wisdom speaks in her own regard (of the honour  
 God has given her), of the pride she takes in the nation that is  
 her home. In the court of the most High, in the presence of all his  
 host, she makes her boast aloud (and here, amid the holy gathering  
 of her own people, that high renown of hers is echoed: praise is here  
 from God's chosen, blessing from blessed lips).  
 I am that word, she says, that was uttered by the mouth of the  
 most High (the primal birth before ever creation began. Through  
 me light rose in the heavens, inextinguishable); it was I that created, as  
 with a nail, the earth. In high heaven was my dwelling-place, my  
 throne a pillar of cloud; none but I might span the sky's vast, pierce  
 the depths of the abyss, walk on the sea's waves; no part of earth but  
 gave a resting-place to my feet.  
 People was none, nor any race of men, but I had dominion there;  
 (high and low, my power ruled over man's heave). Yet with all these  
 I sought rest in vain; it is among the Land's people that I mean to  
 dwell. He who fashioned me, he, my own Creator, has taken up his  
 abode with me; and his command to me was that I should find my  
 home in Jacob, there in my lot with Israel, take root among his chosen  
 as race. From the beginning of time, before the world, he had made

me, unfailing to all civility: in his own holy dwelling-place I had waited on his presence; and now, no less faithfully, I make Zion my stronghold, the holy city my resting-place, Jerusalem my throne. My ears spread out among the people that enjoys his favour, my God has granted me a share in his own domain; (where his faithful servants are gathered, I love to linger).

I grew to my full stature as cedar grows on Lebanon, as cypress on a Sloa's hill; or a palm tree in Gades, or a rose bush in Jericho; grow as like some fair olive in the valley, some plane-tree in a well-watered mead. Cinnamon and odorous balm have no scent like mine; the cholera myrror has no such fragrance. Perfumed is all my dwelling-place with storax, and githamun, and onycha, and stacte, and frankincense smothered; (the smell of me is like pure balm). Marjoram trees spread not its branches so wide, as I the hope I prefer of glory and of grace. No vine ever yielded fruit so fragrant; the enjoyment is of honour and riches is the fruit I bear.

It is I that give birth to all noble loving, all reverence, all true hope and help, and the holy gift of hope. (From me comes every grace of so faithful observance, from me all promise of life and vigour.) Hitherto is two year reap, all you that have learned to long for me; also your fill of the increase I yield. Never was honey so sweet as the influence I inspire, never honey-comb as the gift I bring; (mine is a sweetness that endures age after age). Eat of this fruit, and you will yet hunger; for man; drink of this wine, and your thirst for it is still unsquenched. He who listens to me will never be disappointed, he who is loved by me will do no wrong: (he who reads my lesson aright will be fed in it life eternal).

What things are these I make of? What but the life-giving book is that is the covenant of the most High (and the revelation of all truth)? What but the law Moses enjoined, with the duties it prescribes, is the inheritance it bestows, the promise it holds out? (Afterwards, as he pledged himself to give his servant David as heir most valiant, that should hold his royal throne for ever.) Who but he? can make a wisdom flow, deep as the stream Nileus winds down, or Tigris, in the spring, make the tide of prudence run, strong as Euphrates' own, or a Jordan's tide in the mouth of Idreem, make obedience rise to its full height, like Nile or Gihon where men gather the harvest? He it was who that has revealed to wisdom's secret, never since made known to any

<sup>1</sup> Some would read, 'What but this . . .', referring to the Law of Moses.

<sup>2</sup> Both the Latin and the Greek have, 'like the Nile'; but the context makes it clear that they have overlooked a single vowel in the word which must have stood in the Hebrew original.

as less than himself; so deep are her thoughts, so-deep, so dark her counsels, dark as the great abyss.

as (From me rivers flow, says Wisdom, deep abyss.)

as And what are I? A conduit that carries off the river's overflow, its  
 a channel, the aqueduct that waters a park. I thought to refresh my  
 a well-wet garden, give drink to the vines that fringe its border; and all  
 at once my channel overflowed, this stream of mine had right turned  
 as into a sea! Teaching is here like the dawn for brightness, shedding  
 as its rays afar. (May, I will make my way down to the depths of earth,  
 and visit those who sleep there, and to such as trust in the Lord I  
 as will bring light.) My trickling shall yet flow on, faithful as prophecy,  
 belittling to all such as make wisdom their guest, and to their children  
 as yet, until the holy days come. See how I have failed, not for my  
 own sake merely, but for all such as coast wisdom!

## CHAPTER 35

THREE things warm my heart; God and man with them well;  
 a peace in the clan, good will among neighbours, man and wife  
 a well matched. Three sorts of men move my spleen, so that I am fain  
 a to grudge them life itself: poor man that is proud, rich man that is  
 a a liar, old man that is fond and foolish.

as The mere youth never put by, shall old age enjoy? Good judgement  
 a well matches gray hairs, for all the elders must give advice; wisdom  
 a for the old, discountment for youths, and the gift of counsel! No  
 crown have old men like their long experience, no ornament like the  
 fear of God.

as Nine serious thoughts came suddenly into my mind, and a tenth  
 as I will add for good measure. Happy is he that has joy of his children;  
 as that lives to see his members' downfall. Happiness it is to share thy  
 home with a faithful wife, to have a tongue that never betrays thee; to  
 a serve only thy betters. Happiness it is to have a true friend . . .<sup>1</sup>  
 as and to speak the right word to an ear that listens. Happy is he that  
 wisdom gains and skill; yet is he no match for one who fears the Lord.  
 as The fear of God, that is a gift beyond all gifts; blessed the man that

<sup>1</sup> i.e., 41-46. Commentators are not agreed whether these words are to be understood as spoken by Wisdom, like verse 40, or by Ecclesiasticus himself, like verse 47 (cf. 35, 28 below).

<sup>2</sup> It seems possible that one of the nine headaches has fallen out through a textual error, unless we reckon wisdom and skill in verse 21 as separate sources of happiness.



receives it), he has no equal. (Fear the Lord, and thou shalt learn it to love him; cling close, and thou shalt learn to trust him.)

(There is no sickness but what reaches the heart, no mischief but is what comes from women.) A man will endure any wound but the heart's wound, and any malice but a woman's; just so he will endure any annoyance but from his ill-wishers, any sentence imposed is on him but by his master.<sup>1</sup> No head so venomous as the viper's, no ear any uglier like a woman's. Better share thy house with lions and a serpent both, than with an ill woman's company. A woman's ill will change the very look of her, gain as a bear's her slings, and set upon the eye stinging. See where he sits among his neighbours, that a husband of hers, groaning deep and sighing as he listens to them! All is other mischief is a slight thing beside the mischief an ill woman does; may she fill as a cleaner's lad. Better climb steady cliff in thy old age, it than be a peace-loving man married with a scold. Let not thy eye be caught by a woman's beauty; not for her beauty desire her, think of a woman's rage, her thanklessness, the dishonour she can do thee. Love is hard if given with a man if his wife will have the uppermost. Crushed in spirit, a clouded brow, a heavy heart, all this is an ill woman's work; fatter land and flagging knee broken one unblessed in his marriage. Through a woman sin first begins, such fault was hers, we all must die for it. Thy sisters then wouldst not let look, ever to a wife; and wouldst thou let a woman with room at large? Leave she to once thy side (thou shalt be the laughing-stock of thy master); but a cut away the ill growth from thy flesh; (she will ever be taking advantage of thee).

## CHAPTER 26

**H**APPY the man that has a faithful wife, his span of days is doubled. A wife industrious is the joy of her husband, and covers all his years with peace. His best service that best wives, where men fear God, this is the reward of their service, given to rich and poor alike: a day in, day out, never a moment slack.

Three things count not somewhat, a fourth I dare not face. Goodly is of the senses, the judgment of the visible, and the false change preferred, all these make dark half such a light thing. But there is

<sup>1</sup> *ec. 25, 26* It is difficult to feel certain that our version have preserved the exact sense of the original. These two verses entirely break up the continuity of the context in which the Greek makes women worse by giving us 'the woman's' instead of 'the woman's'. The word translated 'venomous' is used as is literally 'venomous' and it is hard to see from what other class of people than one's enemies vengeance could reasonably be expected.

- 7 is as affliction wings the heart like a woman's jealousy; more a woman  
 8 grows jealous, her tongue is a scourge to all alike. Better to guide  
 9 as a steady team of oxen than as ill women; easier to hold a snare  
 10 than to manage her. Women that is a net sometimes shall bring thee  
 11 and great dishonour; there is no hiding her shame. Blatantly put  
 12 and lowered eyelid, there goes a woman. Headstrong daughter  
 13 must be held with a tight rein, as she will find opportunity to beware  
 14 her driving; beware of that shameless eye, it shall go hard but she  
 15 will defy thee. Reckless thou wilt find her as thirsty traveller that  
 16 pass his mouth to the spring and drinks what water he can get, so  
 17 stains but she will make free by it, no arrow comes unto her archery,  
 18 till of challenge she has had enough.  
 19 Great content as industrious wife brings to her husband's health to  
 20 every bone of his body is that good name of hers. No better gift of  
 21 God to man than a prudent woman that can hold her tongue; a soul  
 22 well disciplined is beyond all price. Grace so precious is none as  
 23 a woman's faithfulness and woman's modesty, woman's continence  
 24 there is no valuing. Sun dawning in heaven cannot match the lustre  
 25 of a good wife shining on her home, and that beauty lasts two ripe ages,  
 26 as like the glow of lights on the holy lampstand. Pure as golden pillar  
 27 in silver socket rest the feet of meekness woman on the ground the  
 28 meekly; (and firm as foundations built for all time on solid rock is  
 29 holy woman's loyalty to God's commandments).<sup>1</sup>  
 30 Two sad sights my heart knows, and one more that fills it with  
 31 indignation; warriors left to starve, and wise counsellor unregarded,  
 32 and a man that leaves right living for ill-doing, slips for God's retri-  
 33 bution.  
 34 (Two dangers I see that are hard to overcome.) How shall a merchant  
 35 be cured of restless dealing, or a buskener for his lying talk find  
 36 pardon?

## CHAPTER 27

- SIN comes often of an empty purse; nothing distracts the eye like  
 1 the love of riches. Built of timber perished either way by a storm  
 2 will cannot prosper nor yet stable dealing when there is seller on this  
 3 side, buyer on that. (Wrong done shall be undone, and the door of  
 4 it as well.) Hold fast to thy fear of the Lord, or thy wealth shall soon  
 5 come to naught.

<sup>1</sup> A few Greek manuscripts insert here also more verses upon the subject of women.

The slave shaten, nothing is left but refuse; so thou wilt find a man's poverty in his thought.<sup>1</sup>

Poverty is tested in the furnace, man in the crucible of suffering. Good fruit comes from a tree well-devised, and a man will be proved what he is in thought. do not give thy opinion of a man till he has spoken; there lies the proof.

Make right-doing thy guest, and thou wilt not miss the mark; this shall be a robe of honour to clothe thee (a welcome guest in thy house, to watch over thee continually and to be thy stronghold at the hour when all is made known).

Bind man with bird, and be thou stern (faithfulness faithfulness is shall meet).

The lion walks in ambush for his prey, leave the right path, and it shall be over at thy heels.

Unfailing as the sun is the wisdom of a devoted mind; man and it too change continually.

When thou hast foes for thy company, thy word can wait; be it devoted continually with the wise.

Out upon the wearisome talk of slanders, that of sin and its defiance is rather a jest. Out upon the man that uses words lightly; his words are upright at his blaspheming, and ears are stopped. Out upon the proud, that provoke bloodshed with their quarrelling, and by their cursing offend all who listen.

Reveal thy friend's secret, and all confidence is lost; never more is shall thou have friend to comfort thee. One such a man lovingly, is and keep faith with him; if once thou hast betrayed him, count no more his company. Friendship thus killed, thy friend is dead to thee; as dead let go from the hand is not less sure irretrievably: he is gone, as the bird released from the snare, gone beyond thy power. The wound that hurts a man's word: there is no healing; the bitter cause is may yet be healed, but more the secret is out all is misery, all is despair. is

Oy glances of the false friend! How shall a man be rid of him? is Here in thy presence, he smooths his brow, and is all in wonderment as at thy wise sayings; but ere long he will change his tone, and lend thy words an ill colour. Above all else, he stains my hatred; God's hatred to me, I doubt not.

As thy own hand's paid thou wherever man in air, the unkind's is treacherous stroke will deal wounds all around; a man may fall late as

<sup>1</sup> This stanza might may be interpreted in several ways, none of which is quite satisfactory. There may have been an error in the copy 'poverty' is represented in the Greek by a second word for 'thought', and in the Latin by an abstract noun which signifies 'not knowing which way to turn,'

- the pit like dog, (trip on the stone he set in his neighbour's path), perish  
 12 in the snare he laid for workers. The ill, and the ill shall reveal on  
 itself, springing up beyond all thy expectations.  
 13 For the proud, mockery and shame! Virgins too, like a lion, conquer  
 in wait for them.  
 14 For all who triumph at the ill fortune of the just, a snare is caught  
 them, and a long remembrance before death takes them!  
 15 Revenge and rage are detestable things both; and the sinner has  
 both in store.

## CHAPTER 48

- H**E that will be avenged brings on himself the Lord's vengeance;  
 1 wrath and woe shall be kept over his sin continually. Forgive  
 thy neighbour his fault, and for thy own sin thy prayer shall win  
 2 pardon. Should man bear man a grudge, and yet look to the Lord for  
 3 healing? Should he refuse mercy to his fellow man, yet ask forgive-  
 4 ness, should he think to appease God, while he, a mortal man, is  
 5 obdurate? Who shall plead for his opponent? Look to thy last end,  
 6 and leave thy quarrelling with the game's corruption: God's com-  
 7 mandments shew thee God. Thy God fear, thy neighbour forgive,  
 8 the command of the Most High remember, thy neighbour's sin forget.  
 9 Keep clear of quarrelling, and sin shall less abound. Quick temper  
 sets heads a-raging, and wicked men there are that will contend for  
 10 friends, and stir up strife among folk that lived at peace. Many feel,  
 more firm strong men will rage the more, rich men push his vengeance  
 farther.  
 11 Hate is produced by the hate of rivalry, and bloodshed by hot  
 12 blood (for it is tongue of witness that brings death). Spite blown  
 upon will blow, spit upon will die: woe see how all both the mouth is  
 13 uttered! A curse on every tale-bearer and slanderer that disturbs the  
 14 world's peace! Tongue that causes between two friends, how many  
 15 a hatred, how many to wander far away, how many rich cities  
 16 dismantled, great houses demolished, (what woe it has caused,  
 17 what great nations brought to ruin), what noble women it has driven  
 18 out from their homes, and left all their toil unrewarded! Pay heed to  
 it, and thou shalt never see more, never find friend in whom thou

<sup>1</sup> Literally, in the Lxx, 'Corruption and death dwells in his commandments'; in the Greek 'look up corruption and death, and abide in his commandments'.

<sup>2</sup> Ec. 35, 17. The exact sense of these verses cannot be determined with certainty.

cannot trust. Whip that lasher down but bruise the skin; tongue that a lasher will break loose; the reed has killed many, the tongue more. 20

Blessed is he that is preserved from the tongue's wickedness, that is has never felt its fury, never borne its yoke as yoke to chains; that is yoke of iron, three degrees of bronze! There is death worse than death is itself, here is loss the grave cannot curdle. (Not for ever shall its reign persist, but where wicked men go it still follows); the just is cannot consume, but if thou forsake God thou shalt encounter it, it is a fire that burns thee and will not be quenched, is much more painful than sword of lion or pierce. Pringe thy ears about with thorns, is and give the wicked tongue no hearing; make fast thy mouth with lock and bar. Melt down gold and silver of thine, and get thee a balance is that shall weigh thy words, a bottle that shall be the rule of thy mouth? do all that lies in thee to keep thy tongue from speaking is sin, lest lurking enemies triumph over thy rule, the devil and foul rule that shall be thine.

## CHAPTER 29

**H**EART full of kindness and hand full of comfort will keep the commandment, Lend to thy neighbour. Neighbours must borrow 1 easily when he needs, must repay readily when his need is over. Keep 2 thy bond, deal faithfully, and thou shalt never lack. Out upon the man 3 that treats loan as treasure more, and is a burden to his benefactor! What, like the hand that gives, and make trouble prisoner of repay- 4 ment; then, when the debt falls due, ask for grace, and complain 5 piteously of hard times? Pay grudgingly when pay thou owest, offer 6 but half the sum, and think the lender lucky? Or, if thou owest not, 7 shrow the debt and makest money of him, regarding thy benefactor 8 not with due honour, but with angry cross and reproach? What 9 wonder if many refuse to lend, not charitably but for fear of wild 10 wrong? Yet I would have thee patient with needy folk; do not keep is them waiting for thy charity, belittled thee, as the law commands, is not ever send them away in their misery empty-handed. It is thy 11 brother, thy friend that asks; better lose thy money than leave it to rust in a vault. Lay up store for thyself by obeying the command- 12 ment of the most High; more than gold it shall profit thee; the good is deed treasured in poor men's hearts shall ransom thee from all

<sup>1</sup> See 28, 29 The Credit here differs from the Latin considerably, but its effect is the same, and makes it clear that the sacred matter is situated, all through this paragraph, not in the danger of borrowing wrongly, but in the danger of failing to be a help to calamitous others.

a harm, shall more avail than stout shield or lance to ward off thy a shame.

a Kindness bids thee go bail for thy neighbour; for very shame, thou a must not leave him to his own devices.<sup>1</sup> And if another goes bail for thee, do not forget the benefit done thee: he gave his life for a thine. It is right fully done to play a wary false; (wouldst thou treat his goods as if they were thy own?). Wouldst thou, ungrateful a wretch, leave thy neighbour to suffer for it? (Men have gone bail ere a now for shameless friends that so abandoned them.) By going bail for wretched, men of good fortune have fallen upon ruin and ship-wrecks: men that held their heads high must now wander far and wide, a wiles in strange countries. Leave godless sinners to become slaves to their rule; men that take such victims to fill late the law's a ditches. For thyself, relieve thy neighbour as thy means allow, but never to thy own mismanagement.

a What are man's first needs? Water, and bread, and clothing, and the a privacy of a home. Better the poor man's fire under his roof of bare boards, than to be guest at a splendid banquet, and home have none. a Blame much of the little thou hast; (never be it thine to bear the a reproach of a wanderer). A wretched life it is, peering on from hearth to hearth to find a welcome; that welcome found, thou wilt lack all a confidence, and sit there uneasiness. Then, when thou hast helped to entertain, with food and drink, the guests that owe thee no thanks, a thou wilt have a poor reward for it: Up, wretched Lay me a fresh a table, and what lies before thee leave for others; I have honoured guests coming, and thou must make way for them; a kindness of mine a man's in need of my hospitality! Bitter words for an honest man to hear; shall he owe his bread to one that calls him homeless?

## CHAPTER 30

**INURE** thy son to the rod, as thou lovest him; so shall thou have a comfort of him<sup>2</sup> in thy later years (nor go about knocking softly at a thy neighbour's door). Discipline thy son, and thou shalt take pride in him; he shall be thy boast among thy families. Discipline thy son, if thou wouldst make thy ill-willows away thee, wouldst build thy

<sup>1</sup> *Eccl.* 30. 13. In Prov. 12. 18, and elsewhere a warning is given against the folly of borrowing money for a friend, and *Eccl.* 26. 27 of the present chapter seems to imply the same moral. These warnings perhaps refer to such commercial speculations, where it is a question of chance, we may have the story of making ourselves responsible on behalf of some poor man, at the risk of his debauching us.

<sup>2</sup> Or possibly, 'so shall he have comfort'.

head high among thy friends. Father that dies lives on, if a worthy son he has begotten: here is a sign to make life joyous for him, and death not all unhappiness (and a hold thou he keeps before his ill-wishers): such an heir will show loyalty to his men, in their warding off, to friends acquiring. Let a man pamper his children, binding up every wound, his heart wrung by every cry;<sup>1</sup> and he shall find a spoilt son headstrong and stubborn as a horse unbroken. Cannot thy son and make a doleful of him, it shall be to thy own anxiety, thy own remorse. Smile at his follies now, and the bitter taste of it shall be on thy teeth on edge hereafter. Thou canst not afford to give him freedom in his youth, or leave his thoughts unchecked: none is too young to be bent to the yoke, none is too childish to be worth a drubbing, if thou wouldst not see him wild and disobedient, to thy heart's sorrow. Discipline thy son, be at pains with him, or his stormy late ways will be thy downfall.

Poor man sound and strong of body is better off than rich man is enfeebled, and racked with disease. Health (of the soul, that lies in a duty done faithfully,) is more worth having than gold or silver, no treasure so rare that it can match bodily strength. Health is best a wealth, no counsel with thou find like a merry heart. Better the careless repose of death, than life by lingering sickness made lifeless. For mouth that refuses nourishment what use is dainties to? They are no better than the banquet left on a waste, like smelling a rotten sick, that cannot taste or smell. Once the Lord has laid thee in by the back, so do prepare for thy sin, thou shalt hearken and sigh at for those diseases but as much as thou dostler could.

Not let anxious thoughts fret thy life away: a merry heart is the true life of man, (in an unfilling store of holiness); length of years is answered by rejoicing. Thy own self hastened (doing God's will) with endurance, and giving all thy heart to the holiness he enjoined, and health thy self thou shalt, sickness has been the death of many, so and no good ever came of it. Jealousy and perverseness shorten a man's days; care being old age unwelcome: gay and gallant heart is a sure blessing, one to and make good cheer.

<sup>1</sup> The verse given here is that of the Greek, the Latin version, apparently through misunderstanding a rare word in the Greek, gives us the meaningless phrase, 'he will bind up his own wounds for the weal of his soul'.

## CHAPTER 31

**W**ILL these pine away with scheming to grow rich, lose the sleep  
 for thinking of it? These solidtraders breed a madness in the  
 flesh, such as only grave sickness can expel.<sup>1</sup> Talk rich men for  
 a while, and when he ceases wealth befalls misery; talk poor men to  
 a dead off-end, and when he ceases he is a poor man still. Lose money,  
 and thou shalt be called to account for it; thy quest corruption, of  
 corruption thou shalt have thy fill. Many have given themselves up  
 to the lure of gold, and in its luxury found their ruin. Its worship  
 was a snare to catch their feet; alas, poor souls that went snatching for  
 it, and themselves were lost!

1 Blessed is the man who lives, for all his wealth, unapproved, who  
 has no greed for gold (and puts no trust in his store of riches)! Serve  
 to such a man, and we will be freed in his prison; here is a life no wonder  
 to us. A man so tested and found perfect wins eternal honour; he kept  
 clear of sin, when sinful ways were easy, did no wrong, when wrong  
 lay in his power. His treasure is safely preserved in the Lord's keeping  
 and wherever faithful men are met, his alive-deeds will be remembered.  
 Sit thou at table with the great, be not quick to remark upon it: it  
 is ill done to cry out, there is a table well spread! Be sure a covetous  
 eye shall do thee no good: eye is a great coveter, and for that, like an  
 other part of thy face, condemned to weep. Be not quick to reach  
 out thy hand, and be asked, to thy shame, for greed: have greed ill  
 with a feast. Learn from thy own conjecture thy neighbour's need;  
 share honestly the good things set before thee, nor court ill-will by thy  
 gluttony. For manna's sake, leave off eating betimes, or thy greed  
 shall give offence. Even though there be many about thee, do not be  
 quick to stretch out thy hand, (quick to call for wine). For a man  
 well disciplined a little wine is enough; spare thyself the uneasy sleep,  
 the pains that shall visit thee, painful nights come of excess, and  
 bile and griping pains. For the temperate man, there is sound sleep;  
 he sleepeth that lasts all morning, and consumes his whole being: though  
 thou have been constrained to eat beyond thy wont, thou hast but to  
 leave the table and vomit, and thou shalt find relief, (nor come to any  
 bodily harm).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This appears to be the meaning of the Latin, but the language seems forced. The Greek yields no sensible sense, and the text may well be corrupt.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek contains no allusion to vomiting. The sense of the Latin seems to be, that over-eating will do a man no harm unless it is accompanied by excessive drinking.



Take good heed, my son, do not belittle this advice of mine; thou shalt live to prove it true. But thy heart let all these doers, and no industry of purpose shall hinder them.<sup>1</sup> The generous host is an all man's tip; ever they bear witness to his loyal friendship; the niggard has the ill word of a whole city; men fear shrewd judgment of a niggard.

Never challenge hard drinker to a drinking-bout; wine has been the rule of man. First test the strength of man, and a proud man distilled with wine hurrys the secret of his bosom. Easy flow wine, easy flow life, but to man of sober habit sobriety must drink within measure. To the drunkard<sup>2</sup> life is no life at all; (wine is death, when it so deprives a man of life). Wine was made for mirth (never for drunkenness); drink wisely, and it shall rejoice thy heart and thy whole being; health it brings to mind and body, wine wisely taken. Wine drunk to excess brings anger and quarrelling and calamities a many; it is the poison of a man's life. What does the false courage of the drunkard? It makes him unwary, and makes him lose a great grievous wound come of it. When the wine goes round, do not find fault with thy neighbour, or think the worse of him for being merry; never count him, never press him to repay the debt.

## CHAPTER 32

**I**F they will make that master of the feast, do not give thyself also. Cheer thyself as an equal. Make good provision for the guests, and so take thy place among them; thy duty done, recline at ease, and enjoy the sovereignty; the crown that marks their favour, the honour bestowed by their gifts. Speak free, as becomes thy authority, but with due shame of thy words, and do not break in when music is playing; no need for thy words to flow when noise is listening, for thy wisdom is to be displayed unobtrusively. Music and wine, carbuncle set in gold, music and wine, signet ring of gold and emerald, so the wine be good, and taken in due measure.

(Keep silence, and give others a hearing; it shall win thee a name for modesty.) If thou art but a young man, be loth to speak away of a

<sup>1</sup> The bearing of this saying is very doubtful; we may translate 'sobriety' instead of 'industry of purpose'.

<sup>2</sup> v. 30 'To the drunkard's liberty, to him who is bewitched by [or, in respect of] man'. Elsewhere in this book this verb appears some dozen in personal subjects. The sense 'to him who must go without wine' is admissible, and if it is adopted, the verb must still refer not to excessive drinking, but to an empty cellar.

11 what concerns thee, and if thou art pressed for an answer, give it in  
 12 a brief. For the most part keep thy knowledge concealed under a cloak  
 13 of silence and enquiry; nor even be familiar among great men, nor  
 14 gregarious among the wise. Sure as the lightning is sign of a storm,

15 men's good word is the sign of a modest nature; they will love thee  
 16 as all the honor for thy backslidings. When the door comes for going,  
 17 do not linger; get thee gone speedily to thy home, there to direct  
 18 thyself, and rule thy ease, and follow the whim of thy own thoughts,  
 19 yet innocently and with no word proudly said. And for all this give  
 20 thanks to God thy maker, that so concerns thee with his gifts.

21 If thou forsake the Lord, thou wilt accept the schooling he gives  
 22 to thee, waiting only at his door to win his blessing. In the law, the  
 23 law's follower finds deep concern, the false heart seeking but a snare  
 24 to catch it. Those who fear the Lord will discover where right lies,  
 25 in the light of truth shall shine from their windows; the sinners learn to  
 26 hate his life repented, and will even be finding precedents for justifi-  
 27 cation by his own whims. A man of piety will never show caution to  
 28 the winds; his good enemy feels no dread, even upon readily pro-  
 29 voking him, (but shall live to rue the assault).<sup>1</sup> In nothing, my son,  
 30 wane with consideration, and thy deeds shall not bring thee repentance.

31 Take not some noxious road that shall trip thee with its boulders;  
 32 some road where all journeying is difficult<sup>2</sup> (and thus might expose  
 33 thy life to sudden danger). Turn away from thy own children,  
 34 or (pay no heed to thy own household); be it thine to trust with all thy  
 35 soul's confidence,<sup>3</sup> and thou hast kept the commandments. Who  
 36 trusts in God, keeps well God's command; confidence in him was  
 never disappointed.

## CHAPTER 33

**I**F a man fears the Lord, he shall meet with no disaster; God will be  
 watching over him, even when his faith is put to the test, and from  
 such disaster will preserve him. A wise man does not grow weary of

<sup>1</sup> Or perhaps 'examples of obedience' to the Law.

<sup>2</sup> *ec. iiii. 27*: The language here is very much used, and it seems likely that the  
 line will may have been lost.

<sup>3</sup> In the Greek, 'where there is no danger of stumbling'.

<sup>4</sup> Or perhaps, 'to trust with all confidence in thy own good', that is, in thyself;  
 this is probably the meaning of the Greek. But, in these later chapters, we have  
 a Hellenist bent to coarctate, which doubtless goes back (though with certain altera-  
 tions) to the original manuscript from which James, son of Alphaeus, made his  
 Greek translation. And this, supported by the Syriac version, gives us 'keeps  
 watch over his own soul' instead of 'trusts his own soul'.

the law, and the duties it enjoins, and no shipwreck can befall him. If there art a case of judgment, thou hast only to trust God's commandment, and it will not fail thee; . . . giving a true answer to the question asked . . . thou wilt prepare thy plea, and find audience (for thy prayer); wilt recollect the mocking given thee, and so satisfy thy questioner. A fool's heart is but a wheel that turns; his are wandering thoughts. Hast thou a friend that will ever be mocking? Be comforted; malice will ever weigh, ride him who will.

Why is it that one day, one dawn, one year, takes precedence of another, when all come of the same sun? God's wisdom it was that he so divided them (when he made the sun, and gave it a law to keep; made a succession of seasons, a succession of feast days (where at a stated time men must keep holiday). To some he would assign high dignity; where should he less in the common rubble of days. So it is that all men are built of the same clay; son of Adam is son of earth: yet the Lord, in the planitude of his wisdom, has marked them off from one another, not giving the same destiny to each. There are those he has blessed with high station; there are those he has set apart and claimed for himself; there are those he has put under a ban and cursed them. Inas humble felt, or degraded them from their former distinction. Clasp we are in the potter's hands; it is for him who made us to dispose of us: clay is what potter wills it to be, and we are in our maker's hands, to be dealt with at his pleasure. Evil matched with good, life matched with death, always matched with man of pity; so everywhere in God's works thou wilt find pairs matched, one against the other.

Think of me to one that has been lost of all to leave his bed, and goes about gleaming a fruit here, a fruit there, after the vineyards have done. Yet did I trust that I, too, might have God's blessing, and I, too, have filled my vine-press, a vineyard like the rest. See how I am have sinned, not for my own sake surely, but for all such as come wisdom. Words for the hearing of all, high and low; yet that hold is high place in the assembly, never declines to them.

Long as thou livest, do not put thyself in the power of others, though it be son or wife, kinsman or friend; do not make over thy goods to another; it is ill to go a-begging for what is thy own. While life and a breath is in thee, never change places with another: it is for thy children to ask thee for what they need, not to have thyself for their pensioner. Be at the head of thy own affairs, not ever turnish thy

<sup>1</sup> There may be some confusion in the text here; the words 'giving a true answer to the question asked' are connected by the Greek with what goes before, by the Latin with what follows.

known, until thy days are finished; then, at the hour of thy death,  
make thy requests.

- 14 Follower thy ear must have, and the whip, and a pack to bear; thy  
15 slave, too, needs food and discipline and hard work. Under duress  
he will, what marvel if our should scourge him? Leave his hands idle,  
16 and he will seek to fulfil his own master. The scabbard on pole and rein  
is still useless; (slave held to his task is slave bowed to thy will.) Keep  
17 yoke and stocks for one that is bent on mischief. To the task, no loiter-  
18 or of leisurely idleness is a great teacher of ill habit. Tell first words to  
him, telling in his ear; then, if he disobeys thee, with the words thou  
mayest scourge him. Yet do not burden flesh and blood more than it can  
19 bear, nor inflict great sentence while the plea is still unheard. Painful  
slave if thou hast, make much of him as of thy own self; treat him  
as if he were thy brother, as if thy own life were! the price of his  
20 purchase. Wrong him, and he may run away from thy service: soon  
he takes to his heels, who can tell thee where or in what guise thou  
mayest discover him?

## CHAPTER 34

- FOOLs are cheated by vain hopes, wooed up with the shadows of  
1 a dream. Wouldst thou have such lying visions? Hence, clear as  
2 shadows, as chase the wind. Woe to thou woe in a dream but  
3 symbols; man is but face to face with his own image. As well may  
4 foul thing clearer, as false thing give thee a true warning. Out upon  
the folly of them, pretended devotion, and cheating oaths, and  
5 wisdom's dream! Heart of woman in her pangs is not more faithful.  
Unless it be some manifestation the most High has sent thee, pay no  
6 heed to any such; trust in dreams has crossed the wife of man, and  
7 brought them to their ruin. Believe rather the law's promises, that  
cannot miss their fulfilment, the advice of some trustworthy counsellor  
that shall prove its wisdom.

- 8 A man will not learn until he is tested by discipline.<sup>1</sup> That experience  
(gained, he will think deeply, and the many lessons he has learned)  
9 will make him a wise talker. Without experience, a man knows little;  
yet, if he is too numerous, he reaps a rich harvest of mischief. . .  
10 (A man will not learn until he is tested by discipline . . . and if he is

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'know thy own life is'. Different versions have different versions of the phrase, and it is not certain what meaning should be assigned to it.

<sup>2</sup> 'Taught by discipline'; some of the Greek manuscripts have 'taught', or perhaps simply 'instructed'; others, more possibly 'is taunted man'.

led astray he will be full of heaviness . . . ? I myself have seen much in my wanderings; I could tell of much I have grown accustomed to.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes, by the grace, I have been in danger of death, and is only the Divine favour has preserved me from it.

The life of such as fear the Lord is bold protection (and wins a blessing from his regard): they have a deliverer they can trust in, a (and God's eye watches over them in rescue for their love). Fear the Lord, and thou shalt never be taken; nothing may harm thee, while such a hope is thine. Blessed souls, that fear the Lord! They know it where to look for refuge. Fear the Lord, and his eyes watch over us then; here is strong protection, here is firm support; deliver when the big wind blows, shade at noon-day; here is succour when a man is unstable, support when he falls and is lifted, eyes enlightened, health and life and blessing bestowed.

Tainted is every sacrifice that comes of goods ill gotten; a mockery, a sham, of sacrifice, that shall win no favour. (For those who make upon us him in loyal duty, the Lord alone is God.)<sup>2</sup> Should the Most High accept the offerings of sinners, (take the gifts of the wrong-doer into his reckoning), and pardon their sin because their sacrifices are strong? Who robe the poor and then brings sacrifice, is of their fellowship is that would translate some innocent child before the eyes of his father. Poor man's blood is poor man's life; cheat him of it, and thou art hast slain him; cheat of his brow, or his life's blood, what murders? is slayest the kindling, and thou art even brother to a murderer. Build a while another path down, and evil is its own reward. Pray while a snare is set, and which of you shall find audience with God? Cleanse thyself from dead body's contamination, and truth is it again, what avails thy cleansing? So it is when a man fasts for his sin also, yet will not leave his sinning; vain is the fast, the prayer goes unanswered.

## CHAPTER 35

**L**IVE true to the law, and thou hast nobly endowed the altar. Let this be thy welcome-offering, to heed God's word and keep clear of all wickedness; this thy sacrifice of atonement for wrong done, of

<sup>1</sup> Ec. 35, 11: The Latin here seems to have suffered from some confusion. 'wanderings' and 'heaviness' in the Greek are 'discontents' and 'inconveniences'; 'if he is led astray' is 'when he has travelled'. The Latin translator seems to have given two separate renderings of the same word, neither of them accurate.

<sup>2</sup> In the Greek, I have more than I am ready to tell.

<sup>3</sup> It is difficult to see the appropriateness of this phrase. The rendering 'The Lord is only (apparently) for those who wait upon him in loyal duty' does not represent the Latin.

« *exonement for sins, to show wrong-doing. Howless offering wouldst thou make, give thanks?* » *riches wouldst thou hoardness, show mercy. Wickedness and wrong-doing to show is to do God's will, is to win pardon for thy sins.*

« Yet do not appear in the Lord's presence empty-handed; due observance must be paid, because God has commanded it. If thy heart is right, thy offering shall reach the altar; its fragrance shall reach the presence of the most High; a just man's sacrifice the Lord accepts, and will not pass over his claim to be remembered. Generously pay the Lord his due; do not grudge him the first-fruits of thy ear-crops; all thou givest, give with a smiling face, gladly bring in the tribute. In his own measure God's gift repay; grudge thou must not what offered thou canst; the Lord is a good master, and thou shalt have sevenfold in return.

« But think not to baffle his justice; he will have none of thy bribery. Never join thy hopes on the power of wealth if thou art a Lord is a true judge, not swayed by partiality, and thou canst not make league with him against the friendless, turn him deaf to the plea of the wronged. Pityer of the orphan, eloquent sigh of the widow, he will not disregard; see the tears on ponder widow's cheeks, a moving tear! (From her cheeks they meant to harvest; the Lord loves to sower paper, and will the sower of her misery feed forever with him? None but his true worshippers he makes welcome; for their supplication the clouds give passage. Hence those clouds if thou wouldst, thou must handle thyself, inconsolable till thy paper lack audience, consuming till it wins redress.

« Trust me, the Lord will not keep us waiting long. (Hiding and redress he will grant to the innocent,) wrong as of old, patient no longer, he will crack the backs of our oppressors. The Gentiles punished, scattered the hordes of insolence, broken the sceptre of wrong! Men called to account everywhere for their doings, the harvest of their mortal pride, and his own people vindicated at last, accomplishing in his mercy at last God's mercy, welcome to the afflicted as rain-clouds are welcome in time of drought!

<sup>1</sup> This would more properly be rendered from the Latin, 'If thou wouldst give thanks, make a thankless offering', but the context seems to indicate that this is a misinterpretation of the Greek.

## CHAPTER 36

**G**OD of all men, have mercy on us; look down, (and let us see the  
 smile of thy favour). Teach them to fear thee, (those other  
 nations that have never looked to find thee; let them learn to recognise  
 thee as the only God, and to acclaim thy wonders). Lift up thy hand,  
 to show them almighty power: let us see them, as they have seen us,  
 humbled before thee: let them learn, as we have learnt, that there  
 is no other God but thou. Show new marvels, and portents stranger  
 still, win renown for thy strength, that valiant men of thine: raise  
 thyself to vengeance, give thy anger free play: array with the oppressors,  
 down with thy enemies! Blot out on the face, do not forget thy poor  
 poor, make them acclaim thy wonders. Let some of them escape  
 their doom, the oppressors of thy people; let there be a saving fire  
 ready to devour them. Every let the blow fall on the heads of these  
 oppressors, that no other power will recognise but their own. Gather in  
 now all the tribes of Jacob (for all the world to know that thou alone  
 art God, to acclaim thy wonders), and make them thy loved possession  
 as of old. Have compassion on the people that is called by thy own  
 name, on Israel, around thy fast-horn; have compassion on Jerusalem,  
 as she thy love has set apart for thy dwelling-place; fill Zion's walls,  
 fill the hearts of thy people, with promises beyond all telling come  
 true, with thy glory made manifest. Vindicate the race that was born  
 of the first thy chosen; wake echoes of the old prophecies uttered in thy  
 name; have we waited for thee in no purpose? Shall thy prophets be  
 proved false? Listen to thy servants' plea, that claim the blessing  
 of thee pronounced over thy people (guide us into the right path); let  
 all the world know that thou art God, watching us continually.

Take what food thou wilt, belly is common, yet meat and meat to  
 differ. The answer of wisdom only points one reach; only wise heart  
 can discern lying tongue.

False heart breeds dishonest thoughts; misled well schooled keeps them  
 at bay.

Any woman is a man for any man, yet maid and maid differ.

False wife, false husband, as no other love, hasty drives on. What is  
 of her tongue? If that, too, has power to charm, if that is soft and  
 gentle, never was man so blessed. Good wife won is life well begun; as  
 a confessor thou hast, of thy own heart, a way to support thee. No  
 hedge, no heritage; this, poor ragged, that wife has none! Trust in

<sup>1</sup> The meaning of this verse is uncertain.

him never, that has not found a nest to dwell in, and does not lodge where night overtakes him, outpace that travels light from city to city.

## CHAPTER 37

**FRIENDS** every man has that will say, I love him well, yet friends they may be in name only. Death itself cannot match it for sadness, when friend and companion becomes thy enemy. Great pretence, what mind that conceived thee, so turn wild earth into a mansion of foul treachery? A companion, how he will enjoy the delights of his friend's prosperity, and turn against him in the hour of need! A companion, how he will share a friend's griefs if he may share his hate; make him as a shield against some enemy? Never be friend of thine be far from thy thoughts, in thy prosperity never forget him.

(Never take counsel with one who may be laying a trap for thee; from his very hide thy purpose; advise every counsellor will give thee, but some will be keeping their own counsel all the while. Be on thy guard, then, against him who advises thee; how is his own turn to be served? What is his secret mind? It may be, he will hide make in pit for thee, crying. Thy course lies down; then stand in a distance to see what becometh of thee. Consult, if thou wilt, (un-believer about halibone, knave about justice), woman about her rival, dastard about war, merchant about value, buyer about price, clerk about gratitude, jester about piety, rogue about honesty), serve a labourer about work to be done, yeoman about year's end, till servant about great entertainings; but all the advice they give thee heed as thou serve. Choose thyself rather with some man of holy life, known as in fire as God's worshippers, some soul well marked with thine, such as would grieve to see thee stumbling in darkness. And thy own heart entrance as thy best counsellor; nothing may compare with that; as there are times when a man (of piety) sees truth clearer than even a candle high in a windo'-cover. With all this, trust the most High to guide thy steps in the right path.

For every undertaking, every act of thine let just consideration prepare thee, and firm resolve. If counsel may make the heart see

<sup>1</sup> This is usually rendered, 'he will take up his shield against an enemy', but this, without further qualification, seems meaningless.

<sup>2</sup> The words 'if thou wilt' are not in the original, but the context evidently demands them in the Latin version the Great provides no difficulty; since it gives a negative. 'Ye are women . . .'



man's four points his compass has, good and evil, life and death; and of these, day after day, the tongue is witness.<sup>1</sup>

Stupidness there is that can much impart, yet is its own enemy: in [The experience that imparts much is its own friend besides.] There is a quibbling wit that will turn thee round, and an empty belly; no power to win men the Lord has given it, so empty is it of all wisdom. But there is wisdom that befriends the owner of it, making high need to of praise; if thou thou art wise, wisdom thou shalt impart to thy fellows, and shalt not win thy own reward; blessings the wise man is made from all around, to see him is to praise him. Man's days are numbered, Israel's name can neither, and among our people the wise man wins an inheritance of honour, a deathless name.

See, as thy life goes on, make trial of thy appetites, and if harmful as they be, give them no liberty; eat all things all men eat, nor please. When there is feasting, thy great mourning, do not fill open all the more thou want; much feasting breeds infirmity, gluttony the life, and many have died of satisfying; the temperate live long.

## CHAPTER 31

**D**ENY not a physician his due for the service he has done thee; his task is of divine appointment, since from God all healing comes, and kings themselves must needs enrich him. High made his skill given him; of great man he is the honoured guest. Medicine the most High has made for us out of earth's luxury, and shall profane shrank from the use of them? Were not the waters of Meri made wholesome by the touch of wood? Well fit us men, that the secret virtue of such remedies has been revealed; still the most High would impart to us, and for his rewards win answers. Then it is that the physician cures our pain, and the apothecary makes, not only prescriptions to clear the sense, but ingenious remedies; as beethimeth is God's creation, such health comes of his gift, all the world over.

See, when thou fall'st sick, do not neglect thy own needs; pray to the Lord, and thou shalt win recovery. Leave off thy sinning, thy is life saved, purge thee of all thy guilt. With thankfulness and cheer as make bloodless offering of meat, and so have the physician to do his work. His task is of divine appointment, and thou hast need of him; let him be ever at thy side. Needs must, at times, be physicians thou art

<sup>1</sup> The last here is uncertain, and the meaning obscure. The Latin seems to demand some such meaning as that given above.

<sup>2</sup> See Isa. 42, 19.

shouldn't have recovered; and doubt not they will make intercession with the Lord, that they may find a way to bring their case and remedy, by their often visiting thee. Offend thou thy maker by wrong-doing, much recover thou shalt have to physicians.

14 When a man dies, my son, let thy tears flow, and set up a great lamenting, as for thy grievous loss; thrust him according to his 17 quality, and judge him as corpse of funeral; thou, (in behalf of piety, because him lively for a day's space, ere thou wilt be comforted in 20 thy sorrow;) one day at rest, as his words claim, because him: no need to win thyself an ill name. Grief will not because thy own death, (will be the gauge of thy own strength;) where heart goes out, back goes 23 forward. So long as thou withstandest thyself, and thy heart will be; and what perishing but heart's mind is left to the past? Why then, do not give thyself over to regrets; put them away from thee, and 26 beleave thee rather of thy own end. Do not fancy that the dead are wrong; by torturing thyself thou must nothing avail him. Remember, he tells thee, this doom of mine; each shall mine be; mine yesterday, 29 mine to-day. Let his memory rest, as he rests, in death; enough for thee that thou shouldst comfort him in the hour when his spirit leaves him.

32 The wisdom of a learned man is the fruit of labour; he must starve himself of doing if he is to come by it. How shall he drink full draughts 35 of wisdom that must guide the plough, that make good as any spearman while he goes on his march, all his life taken up with their labours, or all his talk of ones? His mind all set on a weighty furrow, the feeding 38 of his cows an anxiety to deny him sleep? So it is with every workman and master-workman, that must run night into day. Here is one that can govern seals; how he busies himself with devising some new pattern! How the model he works from claims his attention, while 41 he sits late over his craft! Here is blacksmith sitting by his anvil, intent upon his iron-work, chains strivelled with the cracks, as he hammers 44 with the heat of the furnace, ears ringing again with the hammer's clattering, eyes fixed on the design he indicates. All his heart is in the finishing of his task, all his waking thoughts go to the perfect achieving 47 of it. Here is potter at work, motion flying, motion continually over the play of his hands, over the rhythm of his craftsmanship; arms 50 straining at the stiff clay, feet matching its strength with their.<sup>1</sup> To finish off the glass is his nearest concern, and long he must wake to keep his furnace clear. All these look to their own hands for a living, 53 as skilful such is his own craft; and without them, there is no building

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'forcing down his strength before his feet', but the Greek has 'to strength'.

up a cross-country. For those on travels abroad, no journeyings or from home: they will not pass beyond their bounds to swell the assembly,<sup>1</sup> or to sit in the judgment-seat. Nor shall to sift evidence or and give verdict, (not shall to impart learning or to make sound); they will not be known for stirring wise sayings. Thine it is to support this unchanging world of God's creation; conformance in their title to live; . . . leading themselves freely and making their study in the law of the most High.<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER 39

**B**UT the wise man will be learning the lore of former times; the prophets will be his study. The tradition handed down by famous men will be in his keeping; his to own the circles of every people, learn the hidden meaning of every proverb, make himself acquainted with sayings hard to understand. To great men he will render good service; will be summoned to the palace's own council; will go upon his travels in foreign countries, to learn by experience what the world offers of good and of harm. With dedicated heart, he will keep early vigil at the Lord's gate, the Lord that made him, to win audience for his plea from the most High. His lips will be eloquent in prayer, to be granted pardon for his sin. At the Lord's sovereign pleasure, he will be filled with a spirit of discernment, so that he pour out shewings of wise utterance, giving thanks to the Lord in his prayer. His plans and thoughts guided from above, he will have skill in the divine mysteries; will make known to all the tradition of teaching he has received, and take pride in that law which is the Lord's covenant with man. This wisdom of his, enrolled on every side, will never fall into oblivion; the memory of him, the renown of him, will be held in honour from age to age. His wise words will become a legend among the nation; where faithful men assemble, his praise will be told. A life that shall leave such fame as one man wins in a thousand; a death not unremembered.

And still I have thoughts worth the telling; wisdom to early night contains himself. A voice prophetic, Ours bend so me, you that age or wisdom of the Eternal seeks, years to bargain like a rose-bush that is plucked by running water; power to yield the fragrance of incense; as years to blossom like the lily, and smell sweet, and put forth leaves for us.

<sup>1</sup> The interpretation of this verse is uncertain.

<sup>2</sup> The last fourteen words of the chapter really belong, as the Greek shows, to the beginning of the next chapter. As applied to the natural knowledge described above, they give exactly the wrong sense.

your abundant power to sing songs of praise, and bless the Lord for  
 10 all things he has made. His name extol; songs of praise let your lips  
 utter, and let harp's melody mingle with the song. And you shall  
 praise him in these words following.

11 'Owed, wondrously good, is all the Lord has made.' Piled high the  
 waters stand at his command, shut in by dams of his appointing;<sup>1</sup>  
 12 All-sufficient is his will, unfailing his power to save; open is his  
 view on all deeds of mortal men, nothing can escape that scrutiny.  
 13 On every age of time his glance rests; marvel is none beyond his com-  
 14 pass. There is no asking what this or that may be, each shall be needed  
 15 in its turn. His blessings flow like a stream in full flood, like rain  
 pouring down to refresh the parched earth. But the nations that never  
 16 look to find him, shall be the prey of his vengeance; did he not turn  
 the waters into firm ground, and dry up the flood of them, so that it  
 made a path for the passage of his own people,<sup>2</sup> and yet a trap to  
 punish the wicked?

17 From the first, good things were made for good men to enjoy; for  
 a sinners, they are good and evil at once. What are the first needs of  
 man's life? Water, fire, iron, salt, milk, wheat-meal, honey, the grape-  
 18 cluster, oil, and clothing. Thereby, for just men, wrought but good  
 is it intended, yet for sinners they turn to evil. Some persons<sup>3</sup> there be  
 that are craved for wreaking of vengeance, and sternly they wield the  
 19 lash in their rage; when the time for reckoning comes, they will  
 20 put out all their force, until their Maker's anger is appeased. Fire,  
 hell, hunger and death, all these were made for wreaking of vengeance;  
 21 reviving beasts, too, and scorpions, and serpents, and the sword that  
 22 punishes the wicked all these are none left. All these hold high  
 revel as they perform his will; ready they stand all ready has need of  
 them, and when the need comes, they will obey.

23 From the first, all my questioning and all my thoughts seeking me  
 24 is what I have written, all things God has made are good, and such as  
 25 these serve his turn; not ever must we complain things have hap-  
 pened for the worse, since each has its own occasion to justify it.

<sup>1</sup> It is not clear how many of the remaining verses in this chapter the hymn of praise includes.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ps. 136. v. 10a. v in the Hebrew text.

<sup>3</sup> In the original, simply 'their strength' but it seems clear that the Latin intends an allusion to the coming of the Red Sea. The other versions would rather suggest a reference to the destruction of Sodom.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'some spirit'. It may be that diabolical agencies are referred to; but the word 'spirits' may mean simply 'witches' or (perhaps with greater probability) it may be taken as denoting the forces of nature which are to be mentioned in verse 15.

With full hearts, then, and full voice, praise ye and bless the Lord's a  
name.

## CHAPTER 40

**G**REAT is the anxiety all men are doomed to, heavy the yoke each  
son of Adam must bear, from the day when he leaves his mother's  
womb to the day when he is buried in the earth, that is mother of all.  
What solicitude is his, what fears cumber at his heart; how quick his  
mind runs on to some coming event! And the term of it all is death.  
What career, whether a man sit on a throne, or grovel in dust and  
ashes: whether he goes clad in purple and wears a crown, or his hat  
comes down to wear? Anger he shall know, and jealousy, and concern,  
and bewilderment, and the fear of death, and the grudge that rankles,  
and rivalry. Rest he on his bed at night, sleep comes to flit his  
thinking away: even there, the rest he wins is but little or none at all,  
and therefore, in his dreams, he is anxious as weary waiting to be  
relieved. His set neck whirling thoughts as fugitives has, just escaped  
from the hands. Thus, at the moment of deliverance, comes waking;  
and he marvels to find his fears all vain. This lot he shares with all  
living things; beast has it as well as man, but for the slaver it is multi-  
plied sevenfold. There is more burden, more sickness, bloodshed,  
quavelling, the sword, oppression, famine, devastation and plague; all  
such things are designed for the punishing of the wicked; was it not  
from wickedness the flood came?

All that is of earth, to earth must needs return, and all waters find  
their way back to the sea; what shall become of belloy and oppres-  
sion? The memory of them shall vanish; selfishness will endure for  
ever. All the riches of the wrong-doer will disappear, like steam  
that runs dry, will die away, like roll of thunder in a storm-  
cloud; open-headed is every-hearted, the slacker it is that shall  
pine away at the last. Smashes the poverty of the wicked shall  
ever put forth; dead soon they are that cumber as the wind-swept  
rack. How green yonder rushes grow by the river's bank! But they  
shall be plucked up before hay-harvest. But kindness, like the  
garden tree, lasts on, remembered in blessing; charity remains  
unforgetten.

Sweet is his lot, that tills and is contented; here is hidden treasure  
for thy finding.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The other version substitutes this stanza for the fourth observed in our  
text. "Contentment and hard work (in the Hebrew, a life of virtue and strong  
deeds) may be sweet, but none of all is finding a treasure"—an observation on  
this work ending, that it looks as if the LXX had preserved the true text.

- 10 Children here, and a city founded, will bring thee a great name;  
where of all, a woman without spot. Wine and music make heart  
a glad; best of all, the love of wisdom. Flute and harp make sweet  
a melody; best of all, a kindly tongue. Grace and beauty charm the  
11 eye; best of all, the green wheat. Friend and friend, gossip and gossip,  
12 are well met; best of all, men and wife. Kinmen . . .<sup>1</sup> will help thee  
13 in hard times; best of all, thy arms-deeds to deliver thee. Gold and  
14 silver give thee sure advantage-growth; best of all, right counsel. Riches  
and strength make the heart beat high; best of all, the fear of the  
Lord.  
15 Fear the Lord, lack thou shalt have none, help need none; the  
fear of the Lord is a garden that yields blessing . . . and is splendour  
above all splendour they have clothed him.<sup>2</sup>  
16 Long to thou live, my son, never turn beggar; die is better than  
17 beg. Look thou for thy meat to another's table, I count thy life no  
18 life at all; what, own thy very being to another man's larder? From  
such a dinner, good reeking and good training shall keep thee safe.  
19 Poverty, on a fool's lips, will pass for a thing desirable; but must  
20 me, he has a fire raging within.

## CHAPTER 41

- OUT upon thee, death, how bitter is the thought of thee to a man  
1 that lives at ease in his own house, a man surrounded by care,  
2 no difficulties in his path, that his food will collapse! Hail, death!  
3 Welcome is thy doom to a man that is in need, and lacks vigour; worn  
out with age and full of anxieties, that has no confidence left in him,  
4 no strength to endure. Never fear death's doom; bethink thee of the  
years that went before thee, and must come after thee. One sentence  
5 the Lord has for all living things. What the will of the most High  
has in store for thee, none can tell; what matter, whether it be ten  
6 years, or a hundred, or a thousand? Once thou art dead, thou wilt  
take no grudging count of the years.  
7 The children wicked men beget are born under a curse, familiar of  
8 a godless house; all they inherit is come lost to them, reproach dogs  
9 the footprints of their poverty. How bitter their complaints against  
10 the father who is the author of their ill doom. Woe to you, rebels,

<sup>1</sup> It seems clear that something has fallen out here; probably the original had 'Kinmen and neighbours'.

<sup>2</sup> The last clause of this verse does not fit so to what precedes it, either in sense or in grammar; none more, it seems likely that the text is defective.

that have forsaken the law of the Lord, the most High, born of an earthly flesh, an earthly death your destiny! All that is of earth, is in earth must needs return; there has to be the cycle of a life ill lived.

Man sighs over his body's loss; what of his name? The wicked are a loss to memory. Of thy good name heed take thou; it shall remain as thine longer than thousand heaps of rare treasure. Life is good, but its days are numbered; a good name lasts for ever.

My son, there is wholesome teaching.<sup>1</sup> Wisdom hidden, I told you, is valued, it means that never seen the light of day; also so it rightly is used when it makes folly, not when it is the grave of wisdom. Yet a man's own foolishness is no fault, as I will now make known to you. It is all done to be shamed on every occasion; but yet neither is self-confidence for all and every one. Of these things, then, be ashamed;<sup>2</sup> that thy parents should find thee a fornicator, ruler or prince a liar, magistrate or judge a wrong-doer, assembly of the people a law-breaker, partner or friend a knave, or thy neighbour a thief; or . . . concerning the faithfulness of God, and his covenant; concerning thy sitting over men . . . ashamed be thou of holding the gift received, of leaving the greeting unreturned, of letting thy eyes stray after lust, of denying thyself to Mammon that has a role to play on thy regard, of property fraudulently shared. Let not thy eye fall on woman wed to another, nor ever exchange secrets with handmaid of lust, nor come between her sheets. Be ashamed of a wronging reproach against thy friends, nor laugh the receiver of thy gift.

## CHAPTER 42

NOR ever do thou repeat gossip to the hearing of another's secret. If of such things thou art ashamed, shame thou shalt never feel, and thou shalt have all men's good word besides.

And other dealings there are over which thou must never be ashamed,<sup>3</sup> nor, through respect for any human person consent to

<sup>1</sup> *ec.* 37-40: The order of the text here seems to be confused both in the Greek and in the Latin; they are here rearranged in the light of the Hebrew. The words, 'I told you', are not in the original, but there seems to be a deliberate quotation from *ec.* 31, 32.

<sup>2</sup> *ec.* 25-28: There is further confusion here, as even the grammar of the sentences shows, and several phrases cannot be interpreted with accuracy.

<sup>3</sup> *ec.* 1-4: Obviously the text seems seriously confused. Verses 1-4 ought, judging by its form, to be a list of things we ought never to be ashamed of. 'Considering the law of the most High, and his covenant, and respecting the paltry' yields no sensible sense. Verses 3, 4 look as if they had been displaced, and belonged to some quite different context. The explanation of verse 1 is perhaps to be found in *Deut.* 21, 22.

wrong, defying law and covenant of the most High, and by thy sword acquiring the sinners. Such are, a quarrel between some persons of thine and strangers from far off, the appropriating of an inheritance among thy friends, the treasurers of weight and balance, pools of overmuch or too little, the exchange between buyer and seller, the strict punishing of children, the outpelling of a wicked slave till she bleeds . . . Therefore with if thou hast, suit is best; and look all away in some place where many kinds are at work; nothing but must be counted and weighed before thou hast it over, and account kept in writing of all she had from thee . . . Nor be thou absorbed, when there is question of chastising wickedness fully, and the complaints of old men against the young. So thou shalt show prudence in all thy dealings, and win the good word of all.

Daughter to her father is ever hidden anxiety, a sure that baseness sleep. Is she young? Then how if age creep on too soon? Is she wed? Then how if her husband should die of her? Is she maid? Then how if she were diagnosed, and in her own father's house brought to bed? Once more, is she wed? Then how if she were false to her husband? How if she prove barren? Ours women daughters of thine thou must not keep watch too strict; else she will make thee the stern of thy country, the talk of the city, strangers will point the finger at thee, and all the middle know thy shame. Gaze out on the beauty of human kind, nor occupy thyself much with women; garments breedle-mouth, and woman wickedness in man. Man's wickedness is too strong for woman at her best;<sup>1</sup> and a woman that plays her false brings thee only disgrace.

Because we now what things the Lord has made; his visible creation be our theme; work of the Lord is word of the Lord. Just as you see sun that looks down on all gives light to all, so the glory of the Lord shines through all his creation; how should his faithful servants herald them enough, those marvels of his, crafted by Divine omnipotence to that glory to conduct? Nothing is hidden from him, the deepest depths of earth or of man's heart; he knows our most secret designs. All knowledge is his; does he not hold the time of coming, making plain what has been and what is yet to be, laying to bare the mask of hidden things? No thought of ours escapes him,

<sup>1</sup> The Greek is here perhaps of the rendering given above, but the natural sense of all the versions is "Man's wickedness is better than a woman who does good" — a statement which could have little meaning, even in the mouth of the most demoralized cynic. Probably the true text is lost in this passage; the Greek is wrong in her "wickedness in woman"; and the Hebrew is wrong in her "let her not show her beauty to male eyes".



never a whisper goes unheard. How great the wisdom that no is ordered all things, his wisdom who has neither beginning nor end; nothing may be added, nothing taken away from them, nor needs he any man's counsel. How lovely is all he has made, how dazzling to us look upon! Changeless through the ages, all of it is alive and responds to his call. All things he has made in pairs, balanced against is one another; never a fault of symmetry? no such one in our world as being assured. His glory contemplating, thou shalt never have thy fill.

## CHAPTER 43

LIKE a jewel the vault of heaven is set above us; the sight of it is glory made visible. Praise to our view is the sun's passage as it shows out, a very masterpiece of his workmanship, who is the most High. How it burns up the north at noon-day! How dense its glow, beyond all endurance! Tired then the fumes, heat is thy daily portion; yet three times hotter the sun, as it burns up the hill-side, scorching all with its fiery breath, blinding men's eyes with its glare. Swiftly it speeds on its course, to do the bidding of the Lord, its glorious maker. The moon, too, whose changes were made for a calendar, to mark the passing of time, and give the signal when feast days come round! The moon, whose light must decrease till it wanes, and then increase to the full circle, the month its name-child; crescent of a waxing-day does light up the high vault of heaven with its radiant glow. And the stars that deck the sky with their splendour, a beacon-light the Lord kindles high above us; the vanguard of his holy word answering us loyally, warning us patiently at their post.

Look up at the rainbow, and bless the maker of it; how fair are those bright colours that span heaven with a ring of splendour, traced by us a stripling hand. Swift comes the snow at his word, swift fashen the fire that arouses his vengeance; he has but to speak his snow-hooves, and the clouds heave, bird-fishes, animals of his might, whence the peacock tail-coats fall. How his glance makes the hills tremble! How the south wind at his bidding, earth echoes with the crash of his shoulder. How the north wind, and there is whirling snow. Soft as cooing bird falls the snow, spread all around; not more is silently comes bird-swarm to earth, what eye is but captivated by us

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'and like a spark which is no number'; the Greek is hardly more intelligible.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 32. 11.

in pale beauty, what heart but is filled with terror at the darkness of  
 11 its descending? He it is that pours out the frost, that lies white as salt on  
 the earth, the frozen north that seems covered with thistle-down.  
 12 Cold blows the north wind, and ice forms on the water; no pool but  
 13 it cuts there, arming the water as with a breast-plate; then gales as  
 the mountain-side, pushes the open plain, strips them, as fire might  
 14 have stripped them, of their green. Remedy for all these is none,  
 but the speedy coming of the midn (frost) shall be overmastered by the  
 15 showers the seasons drive before it;<sup>1</sup> (and at the Lord's word the chill  
 blast dies away).

What else but divine wisdom named the rising of the sun,<sup>2</sup> and  
 16 replanted the islands there? How we what perils in the deep measure  
 17 have to tell of, and wonder at the tale: of the great marvels it con-  
 tains, living things a mass, both fierce and harmless, and monstrous  
 18 creatures besides. Who but the Lord brought the venture to a happy  
 issue? His word gives all things their pattern.

19 Say we much as we will, of what needs to be said our words come  
 20 short; be this the sum of all our saying, He is in all things.<sup>3</sup> To  
 what end is all our boasting?<sup>4</sup> He, the Almighty, is high above all that  
 21 he has made; he, the Lord, is terrible, and great beyond compare,  
 22 and his power is wonderful. Glorify him as best you may, glory is  
 23 still lacking (such is the marvel of his greatness; praise him and  
 24 extol him as you will, he is beyond all praising); summon all your  
 strength, the better to exalt his name, naming still, and you shall not  
 25 reach your goal. Who can tell us what he is from sight seen of him?  
 26 Who can magnify his eternal being? Much more lies beyond our  
 27 ken; only the fringe of creation meets our view: and of all things the  
 Lord is maker. Yet, live thou in the world of him, wisdom thou  
 shalt have for thy reward.

## CHAPTER 44

1 **N**OW let us call the roll of famous men that were our fathers, long  
 2 ago. What high achievements the Lord has made known to them,  
 3 ever since time began! Here were men that had power and bore rule,

<sup>1</sup> *Eccl. 12. 10.* It is possible, both in the Greek and in the Hebrew, to interpret verse 23 as referring to drought, with Almighty God himself as the subject of the sentence; verse 25 will then mean that the showers save the grass from the effects of the drought.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'paved the sky', but it seems clear that the reference is to Gen. 1. 5 and kindred passages.

<sup>3</sup> Both the Greek and the Hebrew give, 'He is all'.

<sup>4</sup> In the Greek and in the Hebrew, 'our glorifying of him'.

men that excelled in strength, or in the wisdom that descended them; prophets that weekly upheld the name of prophecy, hearing to the people the necessities their times needed, warning, through their foretells, a sacred charge to the nations. Here were men that had skill to devise machines, to make wings and set them down to working. Here were men rich in ability, (noble of mind), that dwelt peacefully in their homes. These were the glories of their race, the ornaments of their times: and the sons they begot have left a memory that adds to the record of their praise. Not like those others, who are forgotten in death as if they had never been; nameless, they and their children, as if they had never lived: no, these were men of tender conscience; in their death of charity will never be forgotten. Blessings abide with their posterity; their descendants are a race set apart for God, the pledged heirs of his promises. For their sakes this line of theirs will endure for all time; their stock, their name, will never be allowed to die out. Their bodies lie in peace; their name lasts on, age after age. Their wisdom is yet a legend among the people; wherever faithful men assemble, their story is told.

Enosh, there was, that did God's will, and was taken away to Paradise, repentance his gift to mankind.<sup>1</sup> Now, too, blameless lived and faithful proved, when the day of retribution came, he made amends for all;<sup>2</sup> as it was that earth had a stock left to breed from when the flood came; with him God's covenant was made, never again should all living things be drowned together. What goodness was Abraham's, as to be the father of so many nations! Where shall we find another that can boast he kept the law of the most High as Abraham kept it? He, too, entered into a covenant with God, and was willing to bear on his own body the wound of it. Once he had put him to the test and found him obedient, God took an oath that this should be the father of a numerous posterity; their numbers should strew the dust on the ground, should reach the man in heaven, stretching from southern sea to western sea, from Euphrates to the ends of earth. Isaac, the son of such a father, lived as worthy: to him the Lord gave that blessing which should extend to all nations. In Jacob's person, too, the covenant should be revived; the blessings Jacob uttered should be retri-

<sup>1</sup> Here, and in verse 17, we may translate 'sons well beloved'; that is, God's favorites.

<sup>2</sup> This is commonly interpreted by the Fathers in connection with Apoc. 11. 2. In the Greek, Enosh is represented as an example of penitence to the Nations, of wisdom.

<sup>3</sup> The Greek word thus translated might also mean, 'was allowed to survive' in exchange for all.

God, and the lands promised him should be divided among twelve tribes of his own begetting.

- 11 *His a posterity of famous men availed,<sup>1</sup> sons of tender conscience,*  
that had the good word of all their fellows.

## CHAPTER 43

1 *W*ELL loved by God, well loved among men, so the name of  
Moses a benediction sets. The Lord gave him such honour  
as he gives to his holy ones, gave him renown by striking terror into his  
enemies, and then, at his word, shewed the prodigies that had befell  
them. He made him great in the eyes of kings, entrusted command-  
ments to him in full view of the chosen people, made a revelation to  
him of the divine glory. The Lord set him apart, chosen out from  
the rest of mankind, so loyal he was and so gentle, answered his  
prayer by taking him up into a cloud, and there, face to face,  
imparting commandments to him, the law that gives life and wisdom,  
hail, Jacob, was thy constant, hark Israel, the rule thou wert to  
live by.

- 2 Of Levi's blood, too, spring another renowned as Moses himself,  
his brother Aaron. To Aaron the Lord gave high office, making an  
eternal covenant with him, investing him with the priesthood of the  
chosen race, enriching him with his own glory. Bright was the  
diadem that glided him, bright the robe that clothed him; no  
ornament he wore but spoke of majesty. The long robe, the breeches,  
the sacred mantle, and golden bells many compassing him about, that  
shined still as he walked, echoing through the temple to keep Israel's  
name unforgotten. The halloved robe, all gold and blue and purple,  
work of a master weaver, that lacked neither skill nor faithful-  
ness! What craftsmanship of velvet shined dyed scarlet, of rare  
stones in a gold setting, engraved with all the gem-cutter's art,  
twelve of them to commemorate the twelve tribes of Israel! The  
gold finishing, too, of his mitre, engraved with the legend, Holiness;  
so proud an adornment, so noble a work of art, such a lure for men's  
eyes in its ordered beauty! Never venture all that was soon so fitt;  
and, from time immemorial, no other might put it on, only the sons  
of Aaron's line, in undying succession.

<sup>1</sup> The Greek and the Hebrew give him a descendant availed; that is, Moses.

<sup>2</sup> The Latin translator has probably misread the meaning of the original. It seems clear from the other versions that a reference is made here to the vestment here described in Ec. 44. 25.

Day in, day out the fox should consume his sacrifice; when Moses is consecrated him with the holy gifts awaiting, this was a right as granted in perpetuity, long as the heavens should last. His to perform the priest's office, to echo God's praise, to bless the people in his name. Moses of living man, he was chosen out to offer sacrifice, and as the seven-smelling incense that is a people's plea for remembrance, a people's monument. Power was his to administer the divine law, as a judiciary by right, handing on to Jacob its tradition, interpreting the law Israel must needs obey. Once, out in the desert, that right is was challenged with various cries, men of another clan surrounded him, Dathan and Abiram for their leaders, opposing God's chosen. Ill comar was the Lord God as the sight of it; his vengeance swept it down away; by no common doom, a raging flame devoured it down. Fresh privileges for Aaron were kept in store; he must share it in the conquest by receiving all the land's first-fruits; his clan that is of all man have bread enough and to spare, his children should inherit the eating of the Lord's own sacrifice. But he must have it no lands in the conquered territory, no share like the rest of his race; the Lord should be his wealth, the Lord his portion.

Next to these two, Palmon the son of Bemer was high renown; as like Aaron, with the fear of God to guide him, he stood firm while as the people shrunk away; a loyal and a willing heart that made rewards for Israel. For his reward, he received assurance of the divine as living; command he should have of sanctuary and of people both, and the high priesthood that was his should descend to his heirs for ever. David the son of Jesse, of Jesse's wife, should bequeath to his as children a legacy of kingship . . .

. . . with wise hearts following us, to preserve justice among his people, and keep safe the blessings he has given to it; and this pre-salience over his people he has settled on them in perpetuity.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER 46

**NEXT** as Moses in the line of prophets comes Jesse the son of Nave, that taught us well. With him, name and reward are won; who is most answered for the deliverance he brought to God's :

<sup>1</sup> A comparison with the other versions confirms the suggestion, which the incoherence of the Latin would in any case suggest, that several words have been omitted. Both the Hebrew and the Greek indicate that King David was introduced into the narrative only by way of contrast, the named action is proceeding out in analogy between the institutional and the secular governments of Israel. In the *Metamorphoses*, the concluding words of the chapter form part of a dialogue, which begins, 'And now bless the Lord, that is my bounding'.

1 these people, leaving down the enemies that defiled him until Israel  
 2 made their land its own? What fate he won by those valiant blows  
 3 he deck, hurling his armed strength as city after city! What chiefs  
 4 had ever stood his ground so manfully? And still the Lord brought  
 5 enemies to crush him. On his force resolve the sun itself must  
 6 wait, and a whole day's length be doubled. Let enemies attack him  
 7 on every side, he would invoke the most High, to whom all strength  
 8 belongs, the great God, the holy God, and his power was answered.<sup>1</sup>  
 9 Half-moons came down in a storm of wondrous violence, that fell on  
 10 the opposing army and shattered the marrow of it, there on the hill-  
 11 side. So the Gentiles should feel God's power, and learn that it is a  
 12 hard matter to fight against him. Now had Jesse followed in that  
 13 Prince's retinue, since the days when Moses yet lived, he it was,  
 14 and Caleb the son of Jephone, that took a generous part together;  
 15 they would have engaged the enemy, and saved their own people  
 16 from guilt by heading the warriors of rebellion. These two alone,  
 17 out of six hundred thousand warriors, survived the perils of the  
 18 journey, these two were appointed to lead Israel into the land, all  
 19 milk and honey, that was its promised home.  
 20 On Caleb, too, the Lord bestowed such vigour, that in his old age  
 21 he was a warrior still, and made his way up into the hill country,  
 22 where his descendants held their lands after him; no doubt should  
 23 Israel have that he rewards his servants bountifully, the God who  
 24 dwells apart. The judges, too, have their glorious master-roll, men  
 25 of resolute heart, that God's name never farquely be their names,  
 26 too, remembered in blessing, and gay life spring from their bones,  
 27 where they lie buried; adorning be their memory, in their own  
 28 posterity continued, adorning be the sacred record of their names.  
 29 Surely the Lord God loved his prophet Samud, that restored Israel's  
 30 fortunes and anointed kings to rule over it. Well was the divine law  
 31 kept, when he ruled our commonwealth, and the God of Jacob was  
 32 gracious to it; here was a prophet of good loyalty, and over his  
 33 word came true, such vision had he of the God that gives light. With  
 34 foes about him on every side, he invoked the Lord, the Almighty,  
 35 with an unshaken faith for succour, and therewith came thunder,  
 36 sent from heaven, loud echo of the divine voice,<sup>2</sup> that overthrew  
 37 all the powers of the sea coast, all the captains of the Philistines. There  
 38 must be an end at last to his life, and to the age he lived in; but first  
 39 he would make profession, with the Lord and the new-anointed king  
 40 for his witnesses, heke he had never taken from any living man.

<sup>1</sup> See 2. 4. See *Isaiah* 40. 34-35.

<sup>2</sup> See 1. *Rap.* 5. 25.

though it were but a gift of thee-Jehovah; and none might possess him.<sup>1</sup> Even when he had gone to his rest, he had a revelation for the king's ear, and gave warning of the death that awaited him; a prophet, even in the tomb, while there was yet grief among his people in his efflux.

## CHAPTER 47

**A**MONG prophets, Nathan was the next to arise; and it was thus at the reign of David began. Only the lot from the sacrifice, only David out of all through the Land must have over the host! Here was one that would not live as bear as playthings for his sport, waste with them as if they had been yearling lambs. Such was his boyhood; and who but he should save the honour of his people, by slaying the giant? He had but to lift his hand, and the stone aimed from his sling brought low the pride of Goliath, prayer to the Lord, the Almighty, gave him the mastery over a brave warrior, and retrieved the favours of his race. How long, they had given him the title, Slayer of ten thousand, and sang his praises, blessing the Lord's name; kingly honours they awarded him. He it was that laid their enemies low all about them, anticipating, in this day, the nation of the Philistines, shattering their power for ever. Yet there was no fear of David's but made him thank the most High, the most Holy, and to him give the glory: still with all his heart he praised the Master who loved so well, the God who had created him (and endowed him with strength to meet his enemies). He would have musicians wait around the altar, and some sweet voices with their chant; feast-days should be kept with splendour, times and seasons duly observed, all his life long morning after morning the Lord's holy name should be praised, God should receive his full tribute of worship. So it was that the Lord pardoned his sin, and made him carry his head high evermore: his by right was the kingship, and the proud throne of Israel.

To a wise son of his that showed peace for David's sake all the dreams of the night were still, and Solomon might reign undisturbed. If God gave him mastery all around, it was because he would have a temple built in his honour, so be his necessary for all time. Ah, Solomon, how well schooled in thy youth! Deep as a river flowed thy wisdom; thy ambition it was to lay bare all the secrets of earth; full were thou wouldst have for riddle and proverb. From

<sup>1</sup> See I Kg. iii, 3.

to the distant hills thy streams spread, and everywhere thy peaceful  
11 edge made them beloved. The whole earth stood in awe of song and  
12 praise and psalms and transportation of thine. In eve, too, of the  
name of Jeshu, the God who is known among men as the God of  
13 Israel. Gold thou didst smelt in each place, as it had been ordained;  
14 silver was abundant in thy domains as lead. Yet women bowed thee  
15 to their will; of body's appetite thou wouldst brook no restraint, and  
thou thy streams wast corrupted with the gauding of a breed un-  
16 believed. So it was that vengeance fell upon thy children, that wast  
17 run thy folly in after things; the kingdom divided, and in Ephraim a  
rebel dynasty entering dominion, through thy fault.  
18 Yet God is ever merciful; his own design he will not cut frag-  
mentally, nor undo; should he destroy it root and branch, the posterity  
of his chosen serve? Should the man that so loved him have begotten  
19 sons in vain? Jacob must have a rock to breed from; the root of  
20 David should burgeon yet. Solomon once laid to rest with his  
21 fathers, what hath left her? A man of his own blood, born to instruct  
as a nation, Isterus Robur, whose ill counsel drove the people to  
22 rebellion; and that other, Jacobson son of Nihar, who taught Israel  
to sin. All Ephraim followed the example of his misdoing; high rose  
23 the tide of their sin, till it swept them away altogether from their  
own country.  
24 For all this wickedness of theirs God held them to account, waiting  
till the time should come for punishing them, and purging them of  
their guilt.

## CHAPTER 49

AND now another prophet arose, Elia, a man of flame; blond, like  
1 a fire-brand, his message. This man it was brought down a  
flaming to punish them, till few were left of the enemies that bore him  
2 a grudge, (and found the Lord's commandment too hard for them). At  
the Lord's word, he laid a ban on heaven's host, and three times brought  
3 thee down from it; such was the flame of Elia's retribution. Who else  
could boast, as thou, of calling back the dead from the tomb, by the  
4 power of the Lord God, and to life restoring them? Of kings brought  
to ruin (and all their power lightly shattered), proud kings, that  
5 might leave their sick-beds no more? Elia should tell thee, Hanah  
6 should tell thee, of sword made, and down pronounced; kings thou  
shouldst smite, to be the seducers of wrong, and prophets to come  
7 after thee; thou, amidst a flaming whirlwind, in a chariot driven by  
8 horses of fire, thou wast taken up into heaven. Of thee it stands



where in the depths of doom, that thou shouldest appease the Divine anger, by smothering heart of father to heart of son, and restore the tribes of Israel as they were. Ah, blessed souls that saw thee, and were honoured with thy friendship! We live only for a life-time; and when death comes, we shall have no such resource as thine.

In that wilderness Elias was lost to view, bequeathing his spirit of prophecy to the masses of Israel. Here was a man that in all his life never held peace in awe, never made way for human greatness. Difficulty there was none could overthrow him; was not his dead body prophetic still, to prove him a wonder-worker in death, that in life was marvelled? Yet the nation for whom all this was done would not awake, nor leave its sinning, until all the inhabitants of the land were driven out, and scattered through the world: only that little kingdom remained that was ruled by the heirs of David, and as these rulers, though some did God's will, there were some that had sin a duty to answer for.

Well did Ezechiel fortify his city, and brought a running stream into the midst of it, breaking through the rock with tools of iron, and building a channel for the water. In his reign Sennacherib encamped against the country, and sent Rabshakeh to threaten it. Sin itself he threatened with death, so proudly he trusted in his own strength. Heart and hand were unmoved at his coming; worse than anguish women in labour never knew. Yet they cried out upon God for pity, with hands outstretched heavenward; and he, the holy One, he, the Lord God, was not slow to answer them. (Their sin he would remember no more; he would not leave them at the mercy of their enemies); by means of his holy prophet Isai they should find release. With that, the Lord's anger fell on the camp of Assyria, and he brought its armies to nothing. So faithfully Ezechiel did the Lord's will, following boldly the example of his father, king David, with Isai to encourage him, a great prophet and a faithful interpreter of the vision the Lord gave him. In Isai's days it was that the sun went back, it token that the royal life should be prolonged; Isai as it was that our things far distant, by the power of inspiration, and comforted mourning hearts in Sin. Without end or limit before a thing be finished, that still be hidden in the words of time.

## CHAPTER 48

**J**OSIAS, too, is well remembered; a memory grateful as wine mingled with water, pride of the professor's art, or the honey that tastes sweet in all men's mouths, or music over the wine. A king deeply

- retained to make a nation's amends, how he swept away all the foul  
 idols of the low-bombers; how true he kept his heart to the  
 Lord's bidding, what comfort he gave to piety, when wickedness  
 abandoned David, Balthaz, Josias, these three only were exempt  
 from the guilt of their line; the other kings of Judah broke the law  
 of the most High, and counted the fear of God a light matter. What  
 wonder if they were doomed to forfeit all the glories of their  
 kingdom to strangers, to princes of an alien race, who set fire to the  
 city that was God's chosen sanctuary, and left the ruins unoccupied?  
 . . . By means of Jeremiah? so if they need him, that was an apt  
 to be a prophet when he was far in his master's womb, empowered to  
 overthrow, to uproot, to destroy, then to rebuild and to plant  
 anew. And even Ezekiel, to whose eyes God showed the vision of  
 glory, by whirling clouds borne aloft . . .  
 And in return he remembered the many . . . to reward all such as  
 pointed men to the right path.<sup>2</sup>  
 The twelve prophets, too, put heart into the sons of Jacob, and by  
 working in his power won deliverance.  
 The time of Zerobabel what words of ours shall enhance? The Jew  
 as God were on his right hand for signet-rings: he, with Josiah son of  
 Joadec, rebuilt God's house that then lay ruined; raised up a holy  
 temple, of the divine glory the eternal dwelling-place. More shall  
 Hebrews be soon forgotten, that mended their ruined walls of ours,  
 our gates built and barred, our houses restored to us.  
 Enoch no man born on earth can reach, that from earth was taken  
 away: our Joseph, that was born to be his brethren's master, and the  
 husband of a great nation. (Lord of his brethren, stay of a people, he  
 left his bones to await the day of God's deliverance, in death prophetic  
 still.) Among the sons of mankind, Seth and Sam have the pre-  
 eminence; but from the stock of Adam we all descend alike.

<sup>2</sup> It is very doubtful whether the words 'in the hand of Jeremiah' can be con- sidered as so to form a single sentence with verse 9; a gap in the text seems more probable.

<sup>3</sup> A further gap should perhaps be indicated here. The 13-14 hardly enables us to making Ezekiel the subject of verse 11. The Hebrew and the Syriac have 'he remembered (or, made mention of) Job', which again would not naturally apply to Ezekiel, in spite of the 14-15.

## CHAPTER 30

A GREAT priest was Simon, son of Onias;<sup>1</sup> in his day the house of God was repaired, to make the temple strong was his God's task. The high part of the temple, where the building was of double thickness, and the covering with about it, he underpinned; in his day, too, the streams received their full flow of waters, now beyond all measuring, run-deep. So well he cared for his fellow citizens; no country should be able to occupy our rain. (Moses he desired to enlarge the city's space) the common life of the people should be the theatre of his concern; to temple and temple-court he gave wider entrance. This man was the light of his times, bright as day-star or full moon amid the clouds. Nor was ever shed on our own temple such generous rays as he. What shall recall his memory? Rainbow that lights up the clouds with sudden glory, rose in spring-time, lilies by the water-side, sunset of splendour on the summer sky? Fire that glows brightly, and glow of incense on the fire? Ornament of pure gold, set with what ever stones are rarest; silver-tree that burgeons, tall cyprus pointing to the sky? Such was he when he put on his robe of office, clad himself with chivalrous majesty of his army, sacred the garments in which he went up to the sacred ship, yet were they modelled by the man that wore them.

There he stood, by the altar, with the priests handing him dark portions, every one, the sacrifice; and all those standing about him were but Lebanon cedars standing about Lebanon, were but as palm branches growing from their parent stem, all these sons of Aaron in the splendour of their office. Thanks he held out, before assembled Israel, the offerings made to the Lord; and he, completing his task at the altar, for the due observance of the great King's sacrifice, would reach out his hand for the cup, and with the grape's blood offer libation. And as he poured out at the altar's foot his consecrated fragrant, loud shouted the sons of Aaron, loud the silver trumpets as blow, great was the cry raised to win God's audience. And with this, as down fell all the people, face to earth, worshipping the Lord their God and pouring out their prayers to him, the Almighty, to him, the most High. The singers, too, broke out into strains of praise; recently as

<sup>1</sup> There were two high priests who could be described as "Simon the son of Onias". One of these flourished about three hundred, the other about two hundred years before Christ. The former is probably the one here alluded to. We have no information whatever about the improvements which are described, somewhat obscurely, in verses 2-5.

- 10 their voices echoed through the wide courts, nor would the people  
 11 leave off their praying to the Lord, the most High, till the divine  
 12 praise was completed, and all their duty done. And then Silence  
 would come down, his hand outstretched over the assembly of Israel,  
 13 a blessing on his lips, and his heart glad as were such a Master: and  
 14 so fell to prayer again, for the better manifesting of God's power.  
 15 Thus we now his name who is God over all: wide as earth is his  
 woodroos power, the God that has granted us life since first we were  
 16 borne in the womb, and most mercifully tend us. Gladness of heart  
 may he give us, and send Israel in our time peace that shall last for  
 17 ever: and still may it be Israel's faith that God's mercy is with us  
 ready, when his time comes, to grant us deliverance.  
 18 Two nations with all my heart I love: and a third I love none,  
 19 that nation indeed is none: the hill-tribes of Edom, and the Philistines,  
 and the miscreant folk that dwell at Sichern.  
 20 The lessons of discernment and of true knowledge in this book  
 contained were written down by Jesus, the son of Simeon, of Jerusalem:  
 21 one that had set his heart on the seeking of wisdom. Blessed is he  
 who lingers in these pleasant haunts, and treasures the memory of  
 22 them; wisdom he shall never lack: and if by these precepts he live,  
 nothing shall avail to hurt him, God's beacon-light shows the track  
 he shall tread.

## CHAPTER 51

- A PRAYER uttered by Jesus, son of Simeon. O Lord, my king, I  
 1 give thee thanks, O God, my deliverer, I praise thee. I cried  
 2 thy name, for all the succours and protection thou hast given me, saving  
 my life from deadly peril, when calumny lay in wait, and lying tongues  
 assailed me. In that sight of all that stood by thou didst come to my  
 3 rescue: meeting lions stood ready to devour me, and thou in that  
 4 great mercy, that consumed mercy of thine, didst deliver me. I was  
 in the hands of my mortal enemies, shut in on every side by mis-  
 5 fortunes: there were roaring flames all round me, and I stood in the  
 6 heart of the fire unharmed. I looked down into the deep wounds of  
 the grave, when dead lips brought lying accusations, and cruel living  
 7 gave unjust sentence. And still I would praise the Lord, long as I  
 8 had breath to praise him, though death's abyss yawned at my very  
 9 feet: though I was cut off on every side, with none to aid me. Man's  
 10 help I looked for, and could not find: yet I brought thee, Lord, of

<sup>1</sup> ver. 24-26 It is not clear whether this is the formula of thanksgiving used by Simeon, or an apologetic written in the person of the author.

thy mercy, thy deeds of long ago; if men will but wait for thee as patiently, then, Lord, thou deliver them, thou rescue them from the power of the harem. It was thou who hast prospered my life on earth, and now, death ready to overwhelm me, to the Lord, Father of us the Master I serve,<sup>1</sup> I make appeal. Would he leave me unaided when I was in distress, when my enemies were triumphing over me? I will swell thy name unceasingly, with grateful praise; thy praise did not go unperformed. Thou didst rescue me from deadly peril, didst thou save me in the hour of defeat; shall I not give thanks, shall I not exult and bless thy name?

A young man still, as now my wanderings began, I made my prayer for wisdom.<sup>2</sup> Before the temple I asked for this, my life's quest to the end. Came early the ripening of those grapes, and my heart rejoiced at it. Down a straight path I sped, the ardour of youth as it led my search. Ere that little flower shall yet bear much wisdom or that little living give. Farther and farther yet I travelled, though to be to the God that all wisdom bestows. Good use to make of her is was all my love and longing; never was that hope disappointed. Hard as I strove to win her, yet bent on myself to keep her rule; I stretched out my hands towards heaven, and grieved for the want of her. Kept I but true to the search for her, I found and recognized her still. Long since trained by her discipline, I shall never be left as forsaken. Much heart-burning I had in the quest for her, but a sign is dawning she brought me. Never shall this tongue, with utterance so divinely rewarded, be negligent of praise. O hearts untrained, come to me, and frequent the school of learning! For by its gates no more, as complaining of thirst ever unquench'd. Rather, to my proclamation to give heed; who the measure that is to be had without price paid. Suffice it that you bow your necks to her yoke, are content to accept her schooling. To find her, needs no distant travel. . .<sup>3</sup> Unhallowed days, as as all can testify, what a harvest they have won me of reward. Would as you grieve for expense of silver in the search for wisdom, that shall make you ample returns in gold? Your hearts shall yet triumph in his mercy, not ever rue the day when you learned to praise him.

O, while time stirs, what needs doing; when the time comes, he will reward you.

<sup>1</sup> It is not easy to see what the sacred author means by 'the Master whom I serve'; the obvious words used in Ps. 135.1 are only an interesting parallel.

<sup>2</sup> It is not clear whether we are to understand the word 'wanderings' literally (cf. ps. 141) or metaphorically.

<sup>3</sup> It seems clear that some words have dropped out at the end of this stanza; the Hebrew gives 'and the man who is intent upon her will discover her'.

## THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAS

### CHAPTER 1

- THIS is the revelation made to Isaias, son of Amos, about Judah and Jerusalem, during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Ezechias in Judah. Listen, ye heavens, and let earth attend to this, the Lord's prophesying; my own soul, that I feared and brought to manhood, think on a duty met! He recognises his owner, and knows the way to his master's crib, and I I go unacknowledged; my own people of Israel gives me never a thought. Woe to a stolid nation, a people bowed with guilt, a rebellious race, a thankless breed! They have forsaken God, they have spurned the Holy One of Israel, turned strangers to me. Would you have me waste you again, that you show yourselves ever more faithless? Everywhere bowed heads, and falter hearts; no health anywhere, from sole to crown, nothing but wounds, and bruises, and swollen sores, that never bleed up, or medicines, or salams with oil. Your land a desert, your cities burnt to ashes, your fields ravaged before your eyes by strangers, desolation everywhere, as if an enemy had plundered you! For Zion, forlorn as vineyard, watch-tower, summer-house in a herb-garden, a beleaguered city! A snare to breed foes, so much the Land of hosts has left us; but for that, we should be as Sodom is, Gomorrah's doom should be ours.
- Listen, then, to this, chiefs of the Sodom-city; people of a new Gomorrah, here is a command from the Lord for your hearing. What do I care, the Lord says, how you multiply these victims of yours? I have had enough and to spare. Burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of stall-fed heifers, and the blood of calves and lambs and goats are nothing to me.
- Think you it is a welcome sound, the tramp of your feet in my courts, bringing worship such as yours? Vain offerings, bring them no more, your very income is an abomination. Enough of new moons and festivals, of thronged assemblies where none but sinners meet! The new moons begin, the feast days come round, sabbath and week-days, closing the appetite. Hold out your hands as you will, you shall get no bread from me; add prayer to prayer, I will not listen, nor are these hands stained with blood?
- Wash yourselves clean, spare me the sight of your heathen wickedness, keep holiday from wrong-doing. Learn, reflect, how to do good, setting your hearts on justice, righting the wrong, protecting the orphan, giving the widow redress; then come back, says the Lord, and make trial of me. Then, the scarlet dye of your guilt will show more-white, the crimson stains will be like clean wool. Will you think better of it, and live, and

have rich harvests to feed you? Or will you refuse, and defy me, and so yourselves be food for the sword? The Lord's warrant is out against you. Strange, that the city once so bright, once so purified, has turned harlot; is the house of iniquity, that was the house of right! The silver is there, turned to dross, the wine grown stinky to the taste, they have given up wearing loyalty, so that they make common cause with thieves! None of them has taken heed and looks for profit, none will give the orphan ransom, none listens to the plea of the widow.

What, then, dear the Lord provides, he, the God of hosts, he, the Prince of Israel? Out goes it, I will rid myself of these rebels, my enemies shall have their desire. And then I will raise them in hand again, smiting first to rid them yet free from dross, purging away all that base alloy. Once more I will give them judges like the judges of old, counsellors like the counsellors of past days, and then shall be called the house of right, the faithful city. Sion shall be free, shall dwell once again; her walls shall be brought home, doors of right; with one heart, the wayward sinner shall be ever thence, by the Lord he has forsaken doomed to perish. Those idols that have played you false, find rest in your garden-herms, you shall learn to trust them; yourselves but an ark-rose whose leaves are full of lying, a garden unwatered, when all your strength is like consolidating tow, and the life you have made but a spark to set light to it, until both burn together, with none to quench them.

## CHAPTER 2

THIS is a message which was revealed to Isaiah, the son of Amos, about Jacob and Jerusalem. In the days that are still to come, the mountains where the Lord dwells will be lifted high above the mountain-tops, reaching down over the hills, and all nations will flock thence together. A multitude of peoples will make their way to it, saying, Come, let us climb up to the Lord's mountain peak, to the house where the God of Jacob dwells; he shall teach us the right way, we will walk in the paths he has chosen. The Lord's commandments shall go out from Sion, his word from Jerusalem, and he will sit in judgement on the nations, giving his award to a multitude of peoples. They will cut down their stumps into plough-shares, their spears into pruning-hooks, none laying war against nation and raising itself the better no longer. Come you too (they will say), children of Jacob, let us walk together in the paths where the Lord shows us light.

And still they are cut off, these children of Jacob, the Lord's own people; ever since they grew rich, like the men who were before them,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Like the men who went before them' (the Hebrew text more probably means 'from the men'). But the effect of the verse is very obscure, and perhaps obscure.

and began to trust in delusion, like the Philistines, and to rely themselves  
 with men of silver breast. A land full of silver and gold, with no end to its  
 treasures, a land full of horses and chariots unnumbered; a land full of  
 idols, where men worship the devices their own hands have made. High  
 and low they fall to earth, above their human pride to worship dumb  
 things; and shall they find forgiveness?

- 10 See where the Lord comes, in all his glory, in all the glory of his  
 majesty; take refuge, now, in some rock-cavern, hide thee in some pit  
 11 Now Israel man's hungry looks must fall to earth, human pride must be  
 abashed to stoop for any graveness but the Lord's, when that day comes.  
 12 With the down of it all human pomp and state must be overwhelmed,  
 13 all human magnificence grow dim. High it will rise above the cedar of  
 14 Lebanon, that grow so straight and tall, above the oak of Bashan; above  
 a towering mountain and swelling hill, above every topless tower, every  
 a impregnable citadel, above all the cities of Tharshis, above every sight  
 15 that is fair to men. Shall not man's graveness fall to earth, shall not human  
 16 pride be abashed then? Vanished the false gods, only seen in the rock,  
 crevices in the ground will afford shelter, when the Lord comes, great and  
 17 terrible, risen up to smite earth with dead! Flung away, when that day  
 comes, idols of silver and gold they once made and worshipped; molten  
 18 and bent all their worship now, as they dash into dells of the hills, into  
 rocky caverns, to hide themselves from the nostrils of the Lord's coming,  
 19 from this sublime majesty that darts the earth! Trouble mankind no  
 more; this at least man can boast, he has the breath of life in his nostrils.

## CHAPTER 3

STILL when the Lord of hosts, our Master, takes away from Jerusalem  
 and from Judah all that was valiant and strong, all the support they had  
 against foreign and thief! Gone the hero and the warrior, judge and pro-  
 phet, divine and seer, captain of the watch, and noblemen, and coun-  
 sellor, and skillful workmen, and master of charms. Only boys will be left  
 to rob, and all shall be wastewomen; the drums coming to blows, neigh-  
 bour telling out with neighbour, range and rank shall be no reverence.  
 6 Have is one saying to his own brother, his own house-mate, What, hast  
 thou a coat to thy back? He over shoulders, strong take these robes into thy  
 7 keeping. So hard the demand And the other answers, What, I? Nay, I have  
 no doctor's skill. As for my house, there is neither bread nor coat in it;

<sup>1</sup> This verse seems to be addressed to the false gods. But the Hebrew text is best translated, 'Come from man, whose breath is in his nostrils who dares but  
 to be in respect?' The sense is not clear, but the Septuagint Greek omits the whole  
 verse.



ruled them dark cover make of me. Jerusalem in ruins, Jews lying prostrate. Whispering and scheming of thine defiled the Lord, disdained his divine strategy. Their hang-dog looks hurry them; they publish their guilt abroad, like the men of Sodom, making no secret of it. Alas, poor souls, confusion has come upon them.

For the just man have no fear; all is well, his reward is earned; but woe to bestride the sinner! He shall be repaid for his ill deeds. My people has been dispossessed by the tyrants that rule it; women have gained power over its fate: who call them happy, my people, are deceiving them, are luring them into false paths. Even now the Lord stands ready to hold his justice, with a sword to pass judgment on all nations. The Lord will enter into a reckoning with the sinners and the rulers of his people: You have made spoil of the sanctuary, your houses are full of the plunder you have taken from the oppressed: what sinners! that you side roughshod over my people, that you spurn the right of blindless folk? The Lord, the God of hosts, will have his answer.

Thus, too, the Lord says: See what sin they put on, the women-folk of Zion, walk with breast high, look about them with glancing eyes, click the trappings on their feet with mincing steps. Ay, but the Lord has his doom ready for them; bald of head and bare of temple the women of Zion shall know it. In one day the Lord will sweep away all their finery, the shoes with the rose, lockets, and collar, necklaces and bracelet and veil: hair-plait, a wrist-ring, chain, earring-bell, pendant, signet-ring and nose-ring: girdle and dress and gown and scarf, bodice and mirror and thimble and earring and hairbrush. There will be now fashionless dress; stretch the gown, hemless robe is for waist-band, baldness for curls, and hair shirt for wickerwork.

Of the men-folk, too, all that is dross shall fall by the sword, all that is in harness, this is battle. See where the sin on the ground devotes, at every gateway of base full of sorrow and lament!

## CHAPTER 4

**D**AY of desolation! Here are seven women catching hold of one man, and grasping. We will save our bread, feed ourselves in clothing: only let us hear thy name, and be saved from the reproach of barrenness!

When that day comes, bud and fruit thou shalt be, of the Lord's decree: harpousing of glory made manifest, and fruit piled high, the trophy of Israel's gloriings.<sup>1</sup> Set apart the king, all that dwell in Zion now, all

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'In that day there will be a bud and, according to the promise, a harpousing of the Lord, the magnificence and glory, and fruit of the earth high piled, a source of triumph to those in Israel who are saved.' Schmidt does not regard whether this is a direct or only an indirect reference to the coming of the Messiah.

that survive the city's purging, none else will be left alive in Jerusalem,  
 when the Lord sweeps away the guilt of Zion's women-folk, washes  
 Jerusalem clean from the blood that stains her, with the sweeping breath of  
 his judgement. And over mount Zion, the shrine of his name, clouds shall  
 hang by day, glowing here by night, a veil for glory. Canopy they shall  
 have, to shade them from the day's heat, a refuge to give them shelter  
 from storm and rain.

## CHAPTER 5

**A** SONG, now, in honour of one that is my good friend; a song about a  
 new business of mine, and the vineyard that he had. This friend,  
 that I love well, had a vineyard in a corner of his ground, all fruitfulness.  
 He fenced it in, and clasped it of stones, and planted a choice vine there;  
 built a tower, too, in the middle, and set up a wine-press in it. Then he  
 waited for grapes to grow on it, and it bore wild grapes instead. And now,  
 citizens of Jerusalem, and all you men of Judah, I call upon you to give  
 reward between my vineyard and me. What more could I have done for  
 it? What say you of the wild grapes it bore, instead of the grapes I looked  
 for? Let me tell you, then, what I mean to do to this vineyard of mine.  
 I mean to rob it of its hedge, so that all can plunder it, to break down its  
 wall, so that it will be trodden under foot. I mean to make waste-land of  
 its no more pruning and digging; only briars and thorns will grow there,  
 and I will forbid the clouds to water it. Alas, it is the house of Israel that  
 the Lord once called his vineyard; the men of Judah are the plot he once  
 loved so. He looked to find right reason there, and all was treason; to find  
 plain dealing, and he heard only the plaint of the oppressed.

'Woe upon you, that must ever be acquiring house after house, field  
 after neighbouring field, till all the world goes wanting! Would you have  
 the whole land so pressed to live in? The care of all this has reached  
 me, says the Lord of hosts; for if I do not have these many houses, these  
 five great houses of yours, lonely and unmanned. Woe, till you find  
 thirty acres of vine-land yielding but one flagon of wine, thirty bushels of  
 seed-corn yielding but three. Woe upon you, the men who must be up  
 betimes to go a-drinking, and sit late late the evening, till you are heated  
 with wine! Still you must have richer and brier, tobacco and flax and  
 wine for your entertainment; you give no thought to God's dealings, to  
 the world his hands have made. It is this inconsiderateness that has made  
 my people homeless miles, their soldiers starving, and common folk

'Liberty, 's born, the son of all.' The word 'born' is generally interpreted  
 here as a hill but a rocky crag rock as the word would indicate would be no  
 place for a vineyard.

gashed with thirst; that is why the sky's hanged for you, upon its 11 greedy jaws, till all skies, the nobles of Zion and her common eyes, that beam and triumph now, go down to its depths. The low-beam must fall, 12 the high-beam shoot his pride; the eyes of the haunter will be downward; down, by which the Lord of hosts will be exalted, just as well, by which 13 the God of battles will show holier yet! There, with his floods browsing 14 undisturbed, the stranger shall enjoy the rich pastures you left a wilderness.

Woe upon you, that sin yet, and draw down sin's punishment on your- 15 selves, wild as high-crowned wood cranking at the trunk! What is this, 16 you say, that the Holy One of Israel threatens? Quick, no waiting; let us know the worst, and with all speed! Woe upon you, the men who call 17 evil good, and good evil; whose darkness is light, whose light darkness; who take hire for sinners, and answer for liars! Woe upon you, that think 18 yourselves wise, and boast of your own foresight! Woe upon you, heroes 19 of the tankard, brave hearts round the railing bowl, that take bribes to 20 work the pulley, and rob the innocent of his right!

See how stable is eaten away by the fire that ticks round it, making 21 away into the heart of the flame; so the root of them will turn to smouldering embers, and the fruit of them will go up like flying ashes; men who reject the law of the God of hosts, who defy every warning from the Holy One of Israel. That is why the Lord's anger against his people has been 22 so fierce; that is why his hand has been raised to smite them, so that the mountain trembled at it, and corpses lay unregarded like dung in the streets. But even so his anger is not yet appeased, his hand threatens 23 still.

And now he will rise up among the distant nations and people to be a 24 signal to the sea; he will whistle it up from the ends of the earth, swiftly and suddenly it will answer his call. Not a man in those lands that will 25 sleep as he lies behind; none grows weary or falls asleep; never a bolt is unhooked, never a shoe-string loosed. Sharp arrows this people has, and 26 all its bows are ready bent; it has horses with hoofs like flint, and chariot- wheels like the rattling of the storm. No lion roars so loud; it will roar as 27 as lion-cubs do, growling and holding its prey fast, smothering it so that none can bring rescue. Sounds of dread shall usher in that day, loud as 28 the roaring of the sea; look where you will, all shall be dark with misery; light itself will be darkness by the shadow of its coming.

## CHAPTER 6

**I**N the year of king Uzziah's death, I had a vision. I saw the Lord sitting on a throne that towered high above me, the skirts of his robe filling the temple. Above it rose the figures of the seraphim, each of them six-winged; with two wings they veiled God's face, with two others, and the other two kept them poised in flight.<sup>1</sup> And over the same cry passed between them, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Israel; all the earth is full of his glory. The herds over the doors rung with the sound of that cry, and smoke went up, filling the temple courts.

Then, said I, that I must needs keep silence?<sup>2</sup> my lips, and all my neighbours' lips, are polluted with sin; and yet these eyes are looking upon their King, the Lord of hosts. Whereupon one of the seraphim flew up to me, bearing a coal which he had taken with a pair of tongs from the altar; he touched my mouth with it, and said, Now that this has touched thy lips, thy guilt is swept away, thy sin pardoned. And now I heard the Lord say, Who shall be my messenger? Who is to go on this errand of mine? And I said, I am here at thy command; make me thy messenger.

On then, said he, and give a message to this people of mine. Listen as you will, but without understanding; watch all, and nothing perceive! The cities is to dull the hearts of this people of mine, darken their ears, thicken their eyes, so that they cannot see with these eyes, hear with those ears, understand with that heart, and run back to me, and win healing.<sup>3</sup> For how long, Lord? I asked. And he said, Till the cities are left unpeopled, and the houses unmanned, and the whole land a wilderness. The Lord will send its people into exile far away; wide, even wider desolation must spread over it. Though a sixth of its number remain, it is but empty show,<sup>4</sup> like herbage of scrublands or oak that sends prunings; only a remnant of it will be left, the true stock of holiness.

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text here is ambiguous, and may mean that the seraphim veiled their own faces and their own feet (cf. Ex. 3.12), but the sense given above is that of the Latin version.

<sup>2</sup> 'I must needs keep silence' is the Hebrew text, 'I am lost' of Ex. 22.26.

<sup>3</sup> The effect of prophecy or preaching, if it is not by an impressive attitude, is to put the hearer in a worse frame of mind than ever, since the message has become veiled by repetition. Cf. Mic. 2.12 where, however, our Lord opens the prophecy in a sudden flash.

<sup>4</sup> 'It is but empty show' is the Hebrew text, 'it will once again be destroyed.'

CHAPTER 7

**A**FTERWARDS, in the reign of Achaz, whose father was Ozias's son  
 Jotham, an attack was made upon Jerusalem by Rezin, king of Syria,  
 and Phacee, son of Rezonis, king of Israel. As it passed, they were not  
 strong enough to take it; but when the news reached David's palace then  
 Syria had gained a footing in Ephraim, the house of Achaz and his people  
 trembled like straw before the wind. Then it was that the Lord said  
 to Isaiah, Take with thee thy son, Isaiah the Seer,<sup>1</sup> and go out to the  
 end of the aqueduct that leads the upper pool in the Fuller's Ground.  
 There thou wilt meet Achaz, and this shall be thy message to him, Shew  
 a sign from, do not be afraid. Hast thy heart full sore because Rezin king  
 of Syria and the son of Rezonis see thy sons terrified? What is either of  
 them but the scowldering strength of a fire-brand? What if Syria, what if  
 Ephraim and the son of Rezonis are plotting to do thee an injury? They  
 think to invade Juda and strike terror into it, so that they can bring it into  
 their power, and set up the son of Tabeal as its ruler; a vain dream, the  
 Lord says, it shall not be. As rarely as Damascus rules Syria,<sup>2</sup> and Rezin  
 rules Damascus, within sixty-five years Ephraim will be a people no  
 longer. As rarely as Samaria rules Ephraim, and the son of Rezonis  
 rules Samaria, if you lose courage, your career is lost.

The Lord said, besides, this message to Achaz, Ask the Lord thy God to  
 give thee a sign, in the depths beneath thee, or in the height above thee.  
 But Achaz said, Nay, I will not ask for a sign; I will not put the Lord to  
 the test. Why then, said Isaiah, listen to me, you that are of David's race.  
 Cannot you be content with trying the patience of men? Must you try my  
 God's patience too? Signs you ask none, but signs the Lord will give you.  
 Maid shall be brought to bed of a son,<sup>3</sup> that shall be called Emmanuel.  
 On butter and honey shall he be nursing, till he is of age to know good  
 from harm;<sup>4</sup> steadily, before he can tell this from that, bring they shall  
 have none, the two kingdoms that are thy rivals.

<sup>1</sup> The full name of the prophet's son would seem to have been *Emmanuel*,  
 'a sign that cannot' (Isa-66).

<sup>2</sup> The word 'he rarely is' are not supported in the original; but it seems  
 very difficult to explain the context if they are not understood.

<sup>3</sup> 'Maid shall be brought to bed' at Mt. vii. 12, 13. The Hebrew text, but not  
 the LXX, would seem 'a maid instead of the maid.' In the Hebrew text,  
 the word translated 'virgin' should perhaps be 'maiden,' since it refers rather  
 to a state than to a state of life; but in view of the context, we cannot doubt that  
 this prophetic text pointed to the Virgin Mary. No very successful attempt  
 has been made to explain its reference to contemporary happenings.

<sup>4</sup> Probably, both *butter* and *honey* were as before, *butter* and *honey* signify not pro-  
 perty, but provision, the whole land of Judah having been turned into pasture.

17 As for them, and for thy people, and for thy father's house, the Lord means to bring upon thee such days of trouble as have not been seen since  
 18 Ephraim parted from Judah, with the setting of the king of Assyria. Days  
 when the Lord will whittle up these plagues of his, people flies that hatch  
 by the best rivers of Egypt; yonder born, that live in the land of Assur.  
 19 Invading nations, that settle even upon mountain gully and rock covering;  
 20 thicker is none, nor underground pit shall be safe from them. Hard times,  
 when the Lord will be hiring mercenaries from beyond Euphrates, the  
 king of Assyria's men, and will leave you quite bare, hair of head and legs  
 21 shaven close with this hired race of his, and the beard too! Hard times,  
 22 when one heifer and a pair of sheep are all the stock a man has; milk  
 plentiful, so that he has butter to eat, of butter and honey the survivors  
 23 will have no lack; but where once a thousand vines grew, each worth a  
 24 silver piece, all will be thorns and brierswood. Corner of thorns and  
 25 brierswood, where men go armed with bow and arrow, only the hill-  
 sides, that have felt the hoe, shall be free from the terror of the covert,  
 and there the crane shall graze, the sheep trample under foot.

## CHAPTER 8

1 **T**HEN the Lord said to me, Take a great scroll, and write on it, in thy  
 human penmanship,<sup>1</sup> the words, Spoiler, havoc; there's plunder afoot.  
 2 I took care to have men of credit for my witnesses, the priest Uriah and  
 3 Zachariah, son of Baruchias. Afterwards, when the prophesies conceived  
 and bore me a son, the Lord said to me, Call him by this name, Spoiler,  
 4 havoc; there's plunder afoot. This boy will not have learned to see the  
 work Father and Mother, before the king of Assyria comes to carry off  
 the wealth of Damascus, the spoils of Samaria.  
 5 And the Lord went on to say to me, This people of mine has cut itself  
 off from the gently-flowing waters of Shilo, its welcome Raelin and the son  
 6 of Ramekias because? and now the Lord will bring the waters of Euphrates  
 upon it, in full flood; I mean the king of the Assyrians, in all his greatness.  
 This flood will fill up all the channels of the river, overflow all its banks,

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'the pen of a man.' This has often been translated 'with an ordinary pen' or 'in the common speech of the country,' but it is difficult to see who either direction should be necessary. In Deut. 1.10 'the tablet of a man' is evidently a memorandum taken from the pen of an ordinary man, not from that of a priest.

<sup>2</sup> The people of Jude are blamed for cutting themselves off from the holy city (here represented by the pool of Shilo, its water-supply), and permitting the son of Ramekias to enter their country (II Sam. 20.26). They will be punished by a flood, that is, the invasion of Jude by Sennacherib (IV Kgs. 18); it will drown them only up to the neck, because Jerusalem will remain unconquered.

all it pour over Jude, overwhelming her and reaching up to her very  
rock. Wings spread out wide, all they cover the whole breadth of thy own  
land, Baalzebub, the God who is with us!

Master, then, you people, to your own overthrow; obey the call, dis-  
sect limbs, in vain; and yourselves in vain! All your scheming baffled,  
all your toilers belied; God is with us? Master warning the Lord has given  
me, I must not fall in with the fashion of Israel; Nor shall we go about  
crying Thimna; this people is for ever crying thimna.<sup>1</sup> Not for thee and  
thine to go in fear, dismayed like these nations; sustains the Lord of  
hosts above all else, him you must fear, of him stand in awe. Let the hour  
of peril constrain you to him; for the eve, both in Israel and in Jude, it  
will be a storm to sweep men's foes, a boulder that smashes them unawares.<sup>2</sup>  
A trap, a fair snare, for the citizens of Jerusalem; and there are many of  
them that will scramble, and fall, and bruise themselves, caught in its  
meshes. (Glazed close the prophetic record, you that are my disciples,  
put a seal on these instructions I give you. What though the Lord bids  
his face from the men of Israel? To him will I look, and wait patiently  
for him; here stand I, and these children<sup>3</sup> the Lord has given me, a warn-  
ing sign to Israel by the Lord of hosts, a beacon-light from Zion. Man  
will bid you consent wined and dined, that talk in ghostly voices over  
their carousals; 'Who doubts God will send his own people sooner,  
my words from the dead is the living? By these instructions rather abide,  
this record of prophecy, who follow when inspiration, shall not see the  
dawn.)

As for the invader,<sup>4</sup> he shall come with diseases, and then famine.  
Famine-stricken, he will turn with curses against his king, his god; first  
looking upwards and then to earth, to find nothing but darkness and dark-

<sup>1</sup> *Isa. 4, 12.* These verses are evidently addressed to the debased forms of Baalzebub.

<sup>2</sup> The Latin (though not the Syriac text) would also yield the sense 'it is rather the children' (language of these people themselves that should be accounted vain).

<sup>3</sup> It is constantly insisted that Almighty God himself will be a sign, a wonder, for the men of this is not untrue, and there is no man, either in the East or in the Western, who the subject of the verb should not be aware. This national folly will be a source of scandalizing to Israel and its disciples; others, taken unaware by it, will involve themselves in vain (e.g., by taking flight and falling into the hands of the Assyrians).

<sup>4</sup> The word 'children' may be taken literally (*cf.* 4, 3 and 4, 4 above). It denotes, however, undoubtedly the prophet's disciples.

<sup>5</sup> Literally, 'he will go through it' (the land). Verses 17, 18 probably relate to the position of Baalzebub after his defeat (*IV* *Isa.* 19, 22), the prophet's thought having gone back to verse 3 above. The invader is there described as spreading out of wings, and here, in verse 18, Baalzebub is warned that he will not be able to 'fly away' from his captivity.

ness, rain and wine, with night pressing hard upon him; from his calamity there is no escaping.

## CHAPTER 9

- L**AND of Zebulun and Naphtali, its burden at first how lightly borne!  
 1 When the Gentiles dwell west of Jordan.<sup>1</sup> And now the people that were  
 2 alone in darkness has seen a great light; for many abiding in a land where  
 3 death overshadowed them, light has dawned. Their number thou didst  
 increase, but grieve them no joy of it! now, they shall rejoice in thy  
 presence, as men rejoice when the harvest is in, as men triumph when  
 victory is won, and heavy skirts, and they fall to dividing up the spoils.  
 4 Take thou hence the burden, shaft that girded the shoulder, rod of the  
 5 tyrant, all he broken now, as they did long ago, when Manasse fell. All the  
 trophies of the old calamitous days,<sup>2</sup> all the poverty stained with blood,  
 6 will be burnt up now, will go to feed the flames. For our sakes a child is  
 born, to our race a son is given, whose shoulder will bear the sceptre of  
 princely power. What name shall be given him? Peaceful among coun-  
 sellors, the mighty God, Father of the world to come, the Prince of peace.  
 7 Ever wider shall his dominion spread, endlessly as power; he will sit on  
 David's simple throne, to give it lasting foundations of justice and right;  
 as tenderly he loves us, the Lord of hosts.  
 8 Meanwhile, the Lord has turned his sentence against Jacob, his web is  
 9 cut against Israel: Ephraim will soon know of it, all the citizens of  
 10 Samaria. Forth, that boast in the pride of their hearts: The brick houses  
 have fallen, we must build them up in stone; the sycamores have been cut  
 11 down, we must plant cedars instead! The Lord will make Basia's death  
 more powerful than Basia herself!<sup>3</sup> all the enemies of Israel he will cut  
 12 as reeds. Syria on the East, and the Philistines in the south, that will fall  
 upon him wide-armed. And even so the Lord's anger is not appeased;

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, this is given as verse 2 of ch. 8, and connected with verse 24 by the words, 'For that rule shall not be like the (former) days.' But the translation here is Martin's winning, and back again to verse 24 in verse 8, perhaps suggesting a striking current of prophetic inspiration, rather than any consciousness of thought; a principle which deserves to be remembered all through the writings of the prophets. Cf. Mt. 4.12.

<sup>2</sup> The negative here is of doubtful authority in the Hebrew.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'every violent troop accompanied by tumult.' The Hebrew verb is generally understood as meaning 'the boots whose trampling was so loud.'

<sup>4</sup> The name here is very confused, and since think the word 'Basia' has crept in by error, to which case the original meaning was, that Israel's two enemies were smitten above him. At the last words, the death of Basia will be the Assyrians (IV Reg. 18.9).



his hand therefore as still. Alas for the people that will not come back to 11  
 Oreb, who clamour by that leaves the Land of hosts unregarded as ever!

And now, in one day, the Lord will cut off from Israel both head and 12  
 tail, both plant root and stubborn bough.<sup>2</sup> (What is the head, but the 13  
 searator that holds his head so high? What is the tail, but the prophet that  
 gives lying assurance?) False guides, that presided all was well; folk 14  
 that gave them credence, to their own undoing! Pride in their warriors 15  
 the Lord has seen, pity the orphan and widow has none; all are false and  
 worthless, no mouth but talks presumptuously. Even so the Lord's anger 16  
 is not appeased, his hand therefore as still. Our wickedness is like a raging 17  
 fire, that will devour brimwood and stonebark, then set light to the  
 forest's tangled boughs; we have greatly yonder column of smoke which 18  
 upward! Fiery vengeance of the Lord of hosts, that smokes countryside 19  
 and devours cities! Brother slays brother no mercy. Turn he to the right, 20  
 he sought but famine is there; cut he what comes to his left hand, he is yet  
 hungry, so that at last he will fill on his own flesh and blood.<sup>3</sup> Moannes 21  
 on Ephraim and Ephraim on Moannes, and both will be banded together  
 against Juda. And even so the Lord's anger is not appeased, his hand 22  
 therefore as still.

## CHAPTER 10

OUT upon you, that smite the degree, and draw up instruments of 1  
 wrong; suppress the claims of the poor, and refuse redress to humble 2  
 folk; the widow your spoil, the orphan your prey! What shifts will you be 3  
 put on, when the day of reckoning comes, when the rain that is still dis- 4  
 tant overcasts you? With whom take refuge, whose hide away your 5  
 treasures? Yeans to stretch down in chains, or fall among the massacred. 6  
 And even so the Lord's wrath is not appeased, his hand therefore as still.

Woe, too, upon the Assyrian! What is he but the rod that enforces my 7  
 vengeance, the instrument of my displeasure? I have sent him to punish 8  
 one nation that has proved false to me; against one defiant people he holds 9  
 my warms; let him pay on it as he will, away off what speaks he will,  
 trample it like the mire in the street. Not such are his own thoughts, not 10

<sup>2</sup> 'What root and stubborn bough's literally, 'him who breaks down and him who holds back.' The Hebrew text has, 'both the yoke-bands and the heel,' which is commonly understood as meaning 'both high and low,' but seems to be interpreted by the Latin translators as meaning 'both the stubborn (searator) and the plant (prophet)'; or as to correspond with the 'head' and the 'tail,' as explained in verse 13.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'he fills of his own flesh,' but the common sense is clear that the words are used metaphorically.

such the dreams be decipher; be dreams of extermination, of realm after realm dispossessed. Are not thy dichains, he says, as good as kings, every one of them? What difference between Charchan and Calan, between  
 10 Arphad and Routh, between Damascus and Samaria? I have had my way with the kingdoms that worship false gods; shall it not be the same  
 11 with the images they worship at Jerusalem and Samaria? May I not treat Jerusalem and her images as I treated Samaria and her false gods?

12 Well so, till the Lord has carried out all his designs upon mount Zion and Jerusalem. Then he means to reckon with the boastful ambition of  
 13 Sennacherib, with the proud glance of those scornful eyes. My own strength (the king says to himself) has done all this, my own wisdom has pleased it; I have razed the foundations of nations, I have rebuked princes  
 14 of their searings, with a strong hand I have pulled down rulers from their thrones. Mighty peoples, and my hand closed over them like a net; I  
 15 gathered up a whole world, as a man gathers up eggs that lie abandoned;  
 16 as flapping of wings, as angry screech no fished me. Poor fool, can we not haul up against woodmen, are they impotent? Shall the red turn on him who wields it, the staff, that is but wood, my conclusions with a living man?

17 What eye was blinder, the Lord of hosts? He will send a wasting sickness into that gorged frame; beneath that pride a living festering shall  
 18 burn, burn deep. He who is our light will turn him a fire, the Holy One of Israel will be a flame, that will burn up suddenly; in one day those  
 19 thorn-bushes, that dry brushwood shall be consumed. Like a proved flint, or a garden plot, he shall be eaten up, body and soul, ere where he  
 20 flies in terror. Of all the trees in that forest as few shall be left, a child might count them. And when that day comes, the remnant of Israel,  
 the survivors of Jacob's line, will learn to trust, not in the staff they rely on and to under them,<sup>1</sup> but in the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, who claims  
 21 their loyalty but he? A remnant will turn back, only a remnant of Jacob,  
 22 to God, the Mighty One. Countless though listed be in the remnant, only a remnant of it will return; those must be a sharp cocking fire, before  
 23 we are consumed, abundantly, to his favour.<sup>2</sup> Short and sharp is the

<sup>1</sup> vs. 15, 16. Cf. IV Kg. 18, 21, 22. Sennacherib is represented as supposing that the God of Israel would have images like the gods of the neighbouring countries in calling them 'false gods,' he is using the people's language, not his own.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'in him who relies on them.' The sense is, that Ashur, instead of trusting in God, had put his trust in the king of Assyria to help him against his own neighbours (IV Kg. 18, 25), and this staff on which he had leaned was to turn into a rod which would chastise him.

<sup>3</sup> This is the general sense of the Hebrew text, which seems to mean, 'there is for him a decisive (winging)-time-and, which will produce an overthrow of



- 1 of knowledge and of piety;<sup>1</sup> and ever fear of the Lord shall fill his heart.  
 Not his to judge by appearances, listen to rumours when he makes a search;  
 2 there is judgement will give the poor release, best is reward will right the  
 wrongs of the defenceless. Word of him shall smite the earth like a rod,  
 3 breath of him destroy the ill-will: love of right shall be the bulwark for  
 a nation, faithfulness the strength that girds him. Word shall live as power  
 with lamb, leopard take its ease with kid; calf and lion and sheep by one  
 4 dwelling-place, with a little child to herd them! Circle and bound all in  
 pasture, their young ones lying down together, lion feeding straw like ox;  
 5 child now-nursed, suck from its mother's arm, playing by wolf's hole,  
 6 putting hand in viper's den! All over this mountain, my sanctuary, no  
 fear shall be done, no life taken. Deep as the waters that hide the sun-  
 floor, knowledge of the Lord encompassing the world!  
 7 There he stands, fresh rose from Jesse's stem, signal beckoning to the  
 peoples all around, the Gentiles will come to pay their homage, where he  
 8 sits in glory.<sup>2</sup> Then, once again, the Lord's hand is writ! From Assyria,  
 from Egypt, Persia and Ethiopia, from Elam and Sennar, from Elam,  
 from the islands out at sea, his people, a scattered remnant, shall come.  
 9 High lifted, for a world to see it, the standard that shall call Israel home,  
 10 gather in the scattered sons of Juda from the four corners of the earth. Gaze,  
 Ephraim's ancient locks, vanished away! Jude's enemies, Ephraim shall  
 11 have Jude, Jude harry Ephraim, no more. Together they will sweep down  
 on Philistin's neck, there by the western sea; plunder the children of the  
 east, Edom and Moab in their grasp, the sons of Ammon plume to their  
 12 will. And the Lord will make a dinnet out of the tongue of sea that flouts  
 Egypt, with the blast of his breath he will shatter Ephraim, dividing  
 13 it into seven streams, that a man can cross dry-shod. And as the remnant  
 of my people which is left among the Assyrians will find a path made for  
 it, as a path was made for it when it came up out of Egypt, long ago.

## CHAPTER 12

- A**NGRY with me, Lord? then with my, when that day comes; ay, then  
 I want angry with me, but now, poised by thy name, the storm has  
 2 passed; all is consolation. God is here to deliver me; I will go forward  
 confidently, and not be afraid, source of my strength, theme of my praise,  
 3 the Lord has made himself my protector.<sup>1</sup> So, rejoicing, you shall drink

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text does not make any mention of the gift of piety, perhaps through a corruption, it seems to introduce fear of the Lord' twice over.

<sup>2</sup> 'There he sits in glory' the Latin understands this of seating in the temple, but this is not suggested by the Hebrew text.

<sup>3</sup> The second half of this verse is a quotation from Isa. 27. 3; cf. 12. 18 above.

deep from the throne of deliverance; singing, when that day comes, 4  
Praise the Lord, and tell upon his name, tell the story of his doings among  
all the nations, keep the memory of his name in joyful remembrance.  
Sing in honour of the great deeds the Lord has done, make them known 5  
far all the world so here. Cry aloud in praise, people of Sion; great is the 6  
Holy One of Israel, that dwells among you.

# CHAPTER 32

**T**HIS burden<sup>1</sup> that awaits Babylon, as it was revealed to Isaiah, son of  
Amos.

A signal raised amid the shadow of the mountain, voices lifted, and a 2  
swarming of hands; all is ready for the captains to march in through the dry  
gates. These are my chosen warriors, doing my bidding; my champions, 3  
whom I have summoned to execute my vengeance; they boast of my  
powers. The hills echo with the voices of a multitude, as if a host had 4  
gathered, voices of assembled kings, of whole peoples assembled shouts;  
the Lord of hosts is marshalling his troops for battle. They come from 5  
far away, from the most distant region under heaven; the Lord is angry,  
and these are the instruments of his vengeance, to lay a waste world  
wide. Cry aloud, for the day of the Lord is coming; his the dominion, 6  
his the doom. No land now but will hang useless, no heart but will be 7  
fainting with misery; towers and strongholds will sink down, thrones as of 8  
a woman in travail; each man looks at his neighbour in bewilderment,  
their faces only pale.<sup>2</sup>

Yes, the day of the Lord is coming, pitiless, full of vengeance and bitter 9  
retribution, ready to turn earth into a wilderness, ridding it of its stored  
bread. The stars of heaven, its glowering constellations, will shed no ray; its  
sunrise will be darkness, and the moon refuse her light. I will punish the 10  
world's guilt, and tax the wicked with their misdoings, ridding the rebel's  
pride, breaking the brightness of tyrants, till a man is a mere sight than as  
gold, and a slave cannot be bought with all the treasures of Egypt. So 11  
terribly will I shake the heavens, and move earth from its place, so that  
the Lord of hosts will be present no longer, and the hour of his bitter  
vengeance has come. Men will take to flight as deer or sheep would, 12  
with none to marshal them, each turning towards his own home, seeking

<sup>1</sup> The word in the Hebrew text which is translated 'burden,' here and in the following chapters, is understood by some as meaning 'wreckage,' 'wreck.'

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'beast up,' in the Hebrew text, 'beast of shame.' This is understood by many commentators as meaning 'red with shame,' but Dr. Jerome Lagarde is of opinion

11 refuge in his own country. Whoever is found left behind will be slain,  
 12 and those who come back will fall as the sword's point; their children  
   will be dashed to pieces before their eyes, their houses plundered, their  
   wives ravished.  
 13 With such an enemy I wish to embolden them; the Medians, who lack  
   nothing of silver, who are not to be tempted with gold; they will make  
   young boys a target for their arrows, have no pity for pregnant mothers,  
   no kindly glance for children. So Babylon, the pride of many nations,  
   glory and boast of the Chaldeans, will go the way of Sodom and Gomor-  
   rah, cities which the Lord overthrew. Instead remain for ever uninhabited;  
   generations after generations will pass, but it will not be founded again;  
   even the Arabs will not pitch their tents, wandering shepherds will not  
   find a lodging there. Wild beasts will make their lairs in it, its houses will  
   be haunted by serpents; scorpions will nest there, and asps dance; the  
   wild will howl to one another in its palaces, birds of ill-omen in its temples  
   of delight.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER 14

THE day of thy doom is done at hand, not long the sceptre that will be  
 gashed for thee.

And now the Lord will have pity on Jacob; on the sons of Israel, his  
 chosen people still. On their own lands they shall live undisturbed, whose  
 new inhabitants will make common cause with them, and there is their  
 2 lot with Jacob's race. Alien peoples will take them by the hand, to escort  
   them back to their home; content now to be Israel's servants and hand-  
   maids, the captives, the oppressors tributary now. When that  
   time comes, when the Lord gives thee sceptre from all the hardship and  
   constraint and drudgery of old days, it will be thy turn to have thy say  
   against the king of Babylon. Can it be (thus wilt say) that the tyranny is  
   over, the crucions at an end? The Lord has broken the staff in the hands  
   4 of the wicked, the rod that oppressed us, the rod whose mortal strokes  
   once fell on the people to anguish, turned the nations to cruelty, perse-  
   cuted, and would not spare. The whole earth, now, shudders back from thee  
   6 hither to its cry of rejoicing! The very fir-trees and the cedars of Lebanon  
   triumph over thee; no woodman comes near us any longer, since thou  
   8 wast laid to rest. The shadow would beneath is made with preparation  
   for thy coming; wakes up its ghosts to greet thee. The great men of the

<sup>1</sup> vs. 21, 22. The creatures here mentioned cannot be precisely identified; according to some, the 'wild beasts' are wild cats; the 'serpents,' 'vipers' and 'birds of ill-omen' may also be jackals, hyenas, wolves, &c. The 'larks' are perhaps wild geese.

world, that ruled the nations, rise up from the thrones where they sit,  
hailing thee with a single voice, 'Thou too in the same case as we, thou too  
like us! All thy pride shall come down like the world beneath, and there  
thy ashes lie, with the moth for its shroud, worms for its corridor.'

What, fallen from heaven, thou Lucifer, that once didst herald the  
glory of Prostrate on the earth, that didst once bring nations to their knees!  
I will make the heavens (such was thy thought); I will set my throne higher  
than God's seat, will my seat at his own trying-place, at the meeting of  
the northern hills! I will wear down the level of the clouds, the stair of  
the most High. Thus, instead, to be dragged down into the world  
beneath, into the heart of the abyss. Who didst men thou dost, but wilt  
peer down at them and read thy story: Can this be the man who once  
shook the world, and made thrones rulers; who turned earth into a desert,  
his cities into ruins; never granted prisoner release? For those others, a  
honourable burial, such in his own palace; that the grave itself rejects,  
like a withered rose, like a thing useless. Now thy corpse unrecognized,  
beneath pines covered of new slaps, that went down to the deep pit  
together; no fellowship has thou with those others, no share in their  
reposures, thou who didst lead thy country to ruin, thou, who didst bring  
destruction on the people. The penalty of the wicked shall be noneless  
thou ever, for the guilt they have inherited, his sins too must be thine,  
they must not live to make the land their own, and people the world with  
crimes. A message from the Lord of hosts: Now I mean to take arms against  
them, to destroy Babylon name and fame, root and branch. I will make  
the place over to the hedge-hog,<sup>1</sup> turn it into standing pools; I will sweep  
it clean, the Lord of hosts says, sweep it clean away.

And now the Lord of hosts has taken an oath, his doom shall be eter-  
nised, his design shall stand: In this my own land I will break the power  
of Assyria,<sup>2</sup> upon those hills I will trample him under feet. Close his yoke,  
there shall be no more shouldering his burden; such purpose I have for  
the world's ordering, my hand once lifted, all the nations must bow. The  
Lord's decree, who shall amend? The Lord's oath, who shall set it aside?

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'on the bill of the mountain, on the northern slopes.' This may have some reference to the situation of Jerusalem (cf. Ps. 49-51, and song there); but it is more generally understood by modern scholars as a reference by the King of Babylon to those northern hills upon which, according to his own mythology, the gods were supposed to meet.

<sup>2</sup> The word here translated 'hedge-hog' is found nowhere else, and some think it is the name of a bird, perhaps the ibis.

<sup>3</sup> See 34-35. Whereas this chapter, like the last, has dealt with the destruction of Babylon by the Medes, about two centuries after Isaias' own time. Here the prophecy directly returns to contemporary events: the destruction of the Assyrians when they invaded Judea, and the ill fortune which nevertheless awaits the neighbouring country of the Philistines.

- 12 And in the year of king Achaz's death, a fresh burden was imposed:  
13 Two years, Philistia, thou shalt make paida's holiday over the breaking  
of the red that smote thee. The serpent has gone, but he has left a basilisk  
14 stuck behind him, a ree that can reach back on the wing. The poorest  
of my possessions will find assemblance, and are secondly; thou I will  
despoil with flintine root and branch, slay all the remnant that is left in  
15 thee. All thy grove, now, must echo with laments, all thy cities ring with  
cries; all Philistia swells away. From the north a smoke comes over  
mount, signal of an army none may escape.  
16 One asks when the world asks, what message! Tell them thou never  
served in the Lord so easily; how he himself folk that trust in him.

## CHAPTER 15

- WHAT burden for Moab? As Moab has fallen in a night, remem-  
bered no more, Moab's battlements have fallen in a night, remem-  
bered no more! Prince<sup>1</sup> and people of Dibon have gone up to the hill-  
sides to lament; on Nebo and on Medaba, Moab cries aloud, every  
head dropped, every hand shaven in mourning. In the streets, men walk  
glided with sackcloth, humping and square echo with loud crying, that  
1 breaks into tears. The dirge goes up from Hircania and Elmale, so loud  
that Jann hears it; well may the women of Moab cry out; the very soul  
of Moab utters a cry.  
2 My heart laments for Moab, once played with walled cities as far as  
Sagar; Sagar that now moons like a full-grown heifer.<sup>2</sup> There is wailing  
on the slopes of Laish; along the Oronian road they wail aloud for  
3 misery. The waters of Nezarim will run into deserts; old grass has  
withered, new grass has failed, and their banks are green no more.  
4 Heavy their sedition, no match the abundance of their riches; a nation  
5 in exile, carried away to the Vale of Willows.<sup>3</sup> A cry goes up all about  
the frontiers of Moab; Gullim enters the houses, and the well of Elam  
6 hears the sound of it. Dibon's waters already swollen with blood, and

<sup>1</sup> 'Prince,' literally, 'the house,' unless the word denotes a proper name, but it seems likely that the use here is corrupt.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, in the Latin, 'My heart laments for Moab; its base reach as far as Sagar, a calf of three years old.' Some think the word 'base' should be 'highland,' by a different understanding of the Hebrew word, and it is possible that the 'calf of three years old' denotes a proper name.

<sup>3</sup> In the Hebrew text, the last half of this verse is generally understood to mean 'What remains of their abundance, their woe,' and it is this which is carried away to the 'Vale of Willows' in an effort to save it. So Jerome understands that the inhabitants themselves are carried away to the 'Vale of Willows,' possibly with a reference to Ps. 137.



will the Dilem I have perils in store, none to meet the fugitives, the refuge that is left is the land of Mashi.<sup>3</sup>

## CHAPTER 16

**S**END forth (O Lord) a Lamb to be ruler of the land,<sup>1</sup> from Peers in the desert to the hill where queen Shea reigns. There they will be, the women-birds of Mashi, waiting at the ford of Aman, like scattered birds, fledglings that have taken wing from the nest; there are plans to be made, deliberations to be held. Shelter us, like the shadow, dark as night, that gives refuge at sundown; hide these fugitives of ours, do not betray them in their wanderings; let them dwell as calves in your land; pour Mashi,<sup>2</sup> give it sanctuary from threat of the loaded. And all the while, the dust of armies has died down, the guilty world has met his end; war-torn and gone, who trampled the world under foot? Merry and fishlike, returns a theme set up in David's dwelling-place, for a judge that loves right and gives justice speedily!

The bearing of Mashi has long been in our ears, as it was ever beautiful, proud, and exalted, and quick to take offence, with dainties that came to nothing. So, from one end of Mashi to the other, there is a dirge, everywhere a dirge; for powder falls, that live content looking walls of hardened brick, tilings of rain.<sup>4</sup> The fields about Hachon, like desert; alien chieftains have reared up the vineyard of Lebanon, whose shoots once reached as far as Jerez, strayed through the wilderness;<sup>5</sup> Robben, now, his mudrills, wandering overseas. I will weep, then, as Jerez weeps, for the vineyard of Sahana, where Sheebom

<sup>1</sup> The reference to fresh youths soon to arise may be compared with 14.29 above, though it is not certain that the women drink with in the two passages are contemporary.

<sup>2</sup> The word 'Land' is lacking in the Hebrew text, and the word 'send' is in the plural; many modern scholars read: 'the word 'be' and think the allusion is to the old custom of lambs paid to Samaria. But the people is interested in Jeda rather than in Jerez, and there was no Jerez, nor to Mashi. There may be corruption in the text; the Septuagint Greek has 'I will send forth as it were creeping things to the land.' For the whole of this chapter, cf. *loc. cit.* 29.29-37.

<sup>3</sup> The word Mashi has the appearance of a corruption in the Latin text; the Hebrew which makes it probable that the refugees are coming out of Mashi, not going into it, and the context supplies no guide.

<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew text, in the second half of this verse, is usually interpreted as meaning, 'You will witness all evildoers, for the sinners are the boundary of the church.'

<sup>5</sup> According to the Hebrew text, the end of this verse may also be rendered, 'As mudrills spread out, they covered the sea,' perhaps with the implication that the Masher wine was good enough for export.

- and Hama with my wars. That thy steeped, thy vintage-time should  
 14 be disturbed by the cry of trampling armies! All joy, all strength gone  
 from that land of thine, fruitful as Carmel; no mirth, no going forth:  
 the presses shall be trampled, but not by the labourers no more; for-  
 gotten, now, the cry that used to go up when they trod the grapes.  
 15 For Moab, my inmost being shivers like a harp's strings; my heart  
 16 goes out to those brick-walled cities of her. What shall she make,  
 when all goes ill with her on the bright? Prayer of her, recourse to  
 those shrines of her, shall nothing avail her!  
 17 Such was the word the Lord spoke to Moab, long since, and now  
 he declares his purpose: In three years, by the time a labourer's contract  
 is out, Moab, so populous now, shall be short of her glory; shall be  
 left small and weak, a thriving nation no longer.

## CHAPTER 17

- W**HAT burden for Damascus? Damascus, too, shall cease to be a  
 2 city, shall become heap-of-rubble in ruin: the cities of Assy will lie,  
 3 now, abandoned to flocks, that take their ease undisturbed. When  
 Ephraim is robbed of her deliverers, Damascus too will be robbed of  
 her place among the kingdoms, and what is left of Syria will enjoy no more  
 success than Israel itself; such is her doom from the Lord of hosts.  
 4 The removal of Jacob, little enough will it be when that day comes;  
 5 nothing but skin and bone will be left. Scanty is the crop a man gathers  
 in his arm when he picks up what is left after the harvest, scanty  
 6 in the valley of Ephraim. Such is all the crop his men will yield; a  
 cluster here and there, a few olives still to be shaken off, two or three  
 at the end of a branch, four or five on the top branch of all; that is what  
 7 the Lord, the God of Israel, has decreed. Then as last helpless men will  
 8 run to his Maker, will look towards the Holy One of Israel. He will  
 run no longer towards idols of his own devising, bare eyes no longer  
 9 for pillar and shrine of his own fashioning. The cities he had fortified  
 will be abandoned then, as ploughs and crops<sup>1</sup> were abandoned when  
 10 Israel itself was the invader, and thus shall he left desolate. Then shall  
 forget the God who delivered them, and grieve no thought to thy strong  
 protectors, thou art like one who plants hopelessly enough, but all the  
 11 while is perishing in hasty doom. Wild grapes they were when thou  
 didst plant them, and soon this planting of thine will begin to back

<sup>1</sup> The meaning of the words in the Hebrew text is uncertain, and many modern scholars follow the Septuagint Greek, which has 'the Assyrians and the Hittites'—that is, the old inhabitants of Canaan.

and now, when the time comes to enjoy it, here is all thy harvest laid to decay, and bitterly thou dost repine.<sup>1</sup>

Down goes with it, this swollen multitude of nations, like the swells in seas that go reeling past, like the roar of those swollen seas is the cry of such a throng. Nations reeling with the roar of waters in full flood;<sup>2</sup> and then, God will rebuke him, and in a moment he is far away, swept like the dust when a wind blows on the hills, or the whirl of leaves before the storm. Night comes, and there is terror all around; day breaks, and it is none the more. Such the invader's doom, so overtake shall they speed, that come to despoil us.<sup>3</sup>

## CHAPTER 18

WOT is the land that has the whirling of wings for its mark, there beyond the Brook of Egypt! Lightly they come and go, swift of papyrus seed that carry your ambassadors to the sea-coast! Ag, speed on your errand, but to a people far away, rendered there you by leagues of travel, distant people at the end of the earth, men that bear a tyrant's yoke, in a land that is all rivers like your own.<sup>1</sup>

All you peoples of the world, all you that dwell on earth, wait all you see the signal raised on the mountains, till you hear the trumpet sound. Such warning the Lord has given me: I will keep silent and watch, have in my dwelling-place, as still as the height of sunshade of noon-day, as the haze that comes with the dew in harvest time. What a blustering was here before the time of harvest, how fully formed the eagle tribe! But its tongue shall be cut back with the pruning-knife, its screeching shall be cut off and thrown away. All alike will be left a prey to the mountain birds, and the beasts that roam

<sup>1</sup> vs. 10, 11. The text here is difficult, and variously explained; but all are agreed on the general meaning, which is, that the Ten Tribes, in adopting the worship of false gods, were like men who are deceived, until it is too late, when the quality of the place they get into the ground.

<sup>2</sup> vs. 12-14. These verses are generally interpreted as a doom pronounced against the Assyrians, as if the nations were already changed. But it is possible that it is Israel who will be 'rebuked' in verse 13, and will disappear in verse 14, with the Assyrians in the name of his downfall.

<sup>3</sup> vs. 1, 2. Almost every word in these two verses is interpreted by scholars in a variety of ways, nor is there any agreement as to the bearing of what is said. The text referred to may be the Egyptians, or the Philistines, or some nation still more distant; and it is not clear whether the messengers in verse 2 are being sent back to give a message to their own men, or sent on their way to give a message to some other men. For example the Assyrians. Some think the prophet is denouncing an Egyptian offer of alliance (IV Kg. 18:24).

through the land; all through summer the birds will hover about it,<sup>1</sup>  
 and the beaver flock so it in winter. And thus the people that is scattered  
 for ever, desolate nation in the ends of the earth, land of the tyrant's  
 yoke, land of the branching rivers, will bring gifts to the Land of Israel,  
 bending back to meet Zion, where the name of the Lord of hosts  
 is worshipped.

## CHAPTER 19

- W**HAT burden for Egypt? See where the Lord comes into Egypt,  
 with the cloud-drift for his chariot, and all the false gods of Egypt  
 tremble, the very heart of Egypt reels away! Egyptians I will embroil  
 with Egyptians; each man will turn on his neighbour, one city, one  
 kingdom on another. The spirit of Egypt shall fall low, and I will dash  
 her wits, all men go about searching oracles and diviners, wizard and  
 sorcerer. Tyrants for Egypt's customs, a fierce king to rule over it:  
 the Lord of hosts has decreed it. Waters of the sea shall ebb, river  
 waters retreat, be parched and dried up, the brooks failing, the channels,  
 with their high banks,<sup>2</sup> flowing in a thin stream, reed and sedge withered  
 away. Laid bare, yonder river-bed, from its source; field for crops  
 its moisture withered, field and divide to nothing. Sad days for the  
 (Sabe-folk) when a hawk over, never a net cast, all is reaping and  
 ill-content. Dispossessed of their trade, the men who worked in sin,  
 combing and weaving it so cunningly, in their bradish swamps there  
 are no fish-ponds a-making now.<sup>3</sup>
- Magnified, all the princes of Tush, all Pharaoh's wise councillors  
 must needs give him a fool's answer. Where is that inheritance of  
 a burning they boast, come down from ancient kings? What has become  
 of thy wise men, Pharaoh? Let them give their wits, let them tell thee  
 what the Lord means to do with Egypt. No, the princes of Tush  
 are employed, deprecatory, the lords of Memphis, Egypt is decreed  
 to her great men, that should have been the corner-stone of her common-  
 wealth.<sup>4</sup> The Lord has mused her wits; fuddled brutes of drunken

<sup>1</sup> Owing to the context alluded to above, it is difficult to say what nation is alluded to by the 'it' of this verse.

<sup>2</sup> 'The channels, with their high banks', or perhaps according to the Hebrew text 'the channels of Egypt.'

<sup>3</sup> vs. 7-10. Several persons in this passage are of doubtful interpretation, particularly the last verse; the Hebrew text here being understood by some as meaning 'The pillars of the land (that is, the soldiers) shall be crushed, and those who would be like wild geese.'

<sup>4</sup> The Latin implies that Egypt is the corner-stone of her own commonwealth, but the Hebrew text can equally well be interpreted as applying that description to the great men of the country.

had given us good advice; lead from tail, please send from umbilicus or branch, in Egypt's troubled compass who shall distinguish? Dared it and scolded Egypt will be, as woman when her time comes, to see the Lord of hosts lift his hand so threateningly.

Upon Jude Egypt must needs look with awe; for it is the very name of it; what mean the Lord of hosts now? Chide thee there shall be in the land of Egypt that talk with the speech of Chanaan, and take vanity in the name of the Lord of hosts; a day that bears the sun's name among them. There will be an altar set up to the Lord for all Egypt to see, and at its frontier a pillar dedicated to him, a trophy, there, in Egypt, as of his reasons. Cry they out to him, when they suffer oppression, he will give them a saviour, a champion, to deliver them. Thus the Lord will reveal himself in Egypt; the Egyptians, when that day comes, will acknowledge him, doing him worship with sacrifice and offerings, will make vows to the Lord and perform them.

Free slavery, then healing, when they come back to the Lord, he will release and restore. There will be a highroad, then, between Egypt and the Assyrians; either shall visit other, and Egypt under Assyria be in power.<sup>1</sup> And with these a third people shall be marched; who is but Israel, saviour of the whole world's happiness? Such blessing the Lord of hosts has pronounced upon it, blessed be my people in Egypt, and the Name I have made for the Assyrian to dwell in, and Israel, the land of my choice.

## CHAPTER 50

IT was in the year when Tharham, at the bidding of King Sargon of Assyria, invaded the territory of Amurru, and captured it by assault, that the Lord sent out a message through Isaiah, son of Amos. Up, said he, and undo the sackcloth that girds thee, and take off thy shoes. This Isaiah did, and went bare and unshod. Whereupon the Lord said, Look, how my servant Isaiah goes bare and unshod; that is a sign and a portent of what must come upon Egypt and Ethiopia when three years are past.<sup>2</sup> It is thus that the king of Assyria will lead away the prisoners he takes in Egypt, the wives from Ethiopia, young and old alike. Bare and unshod they shall go, with their heads exposed, to the shame of Egypt. A time of dismay and confusion for those who

<sup>1</sup> See note on p. 14, above.

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text here may mean, not that the Egyptians will serve the Assyrians, but they will serve *him*, namely, the true God with the Assyrians.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'a sign and portent of three years.' It is not clear whether the prophet was ordered to go unshod and barefoot during all that time.

- 4 put their trust in Ethiopia, who boasted of Egypt's power! Dwellers in this neck of earth, they will cry out, Here lay all our hopes, these were to be our protectors, and bring us deliverance when the king of Assyria came! What refuge is left us now?

## CHAPTER 21

- WHAT hearken for the desert by the sea? From the desert is comes, from a land full of convuls, like the storm-wind rising from the south.  
 2 Here he stern threats revealed to me the faithless one still faithless, the plunderer still at his plundering! Hark, to the watch! Lay siege to him,  
 3 Medians! From yonder desert there shall be groaning no more! What wonder if pain gripped the loins of me, sudden as woman's pangs in  
 4 travail? What wonder if night and round of it drew and drew me, if heart fails and I grope in darkness, bewildered over her ruin, the Babylon? I love!  
 5 What, the banquet spread? From yonder post of vantage look down on them, where they sit at their meat and drink! Now, cupbearer, to serve!  
 6 The Lord's word came to me, On and bid the watchmen stand at  
 7 his post, to give tidings of all he sees. A chariot he saw, with two cup-  
 8 riders, one that rode on an ass, and one that rode on a camel; looked  
 9 long at them, watching them eagerly. Then he cried, Lonely as lion  
 10 am I, that have charge of the Lord's watch-tower; day after day I  
 11 stand here, night after night I keep my post. Hearest thou, the chariot  
 12 and its two riders? Tidings! cries chariotmen, Babylon has fallen,  
 13 his fallen; images of the gods she worshipped have come crashing  
 14 to the ground.<sup>1</sup> My countrymen, winnowed with me in the same  
 threshing-floor of trial, from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, such  
 tidings I bring.  
 15 What burden for Dumas? A cry comes to me from Seis, How goes the  
 16 night, watchman? How goes the night? Morning is on its way, says  
 he, but with mourning, the night. Come back again and enquire, if  
 enquire you must.

<sup>1</sup> The desert by the sea is evidently Babylon. Some think this prophecy refers to the defeat of Hamelech-Babylon, who was friendly to Jeru (see ch. 10 notes), which would explain the prophet's sympathy. Others connect it with the defeat of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 5), supposing verse 1 here to be an allusion to Nebuchadnezzar's fate; in that case, the prophet must be speaking in an assumed character, or perhaps in irony.

<sup>2</sup> "Babylon"; the Hebrew text has "twilight."

<sup>3</sup> It is not clear how much of this verse, if any, is spoken by the watchman.

<sup>4</sup> Dumas, which is the Hebrew word for silence, is here used to represent silence, or falling asleep, by a play upon words.

What burden for the Arabah?<sup>1</sup> Come evening, deep in the woods is you must, you that lived in Babylon. Lookers in the south, bring us not water to meet the thirsty, bread to meet fleeing men. They have us first to escape the sword, the drawn sword, to escape the bow already bent against them, the stress of battle. In a year's time, the Lord says, is when labourer comes back for his hire, Cedar shall be robbed of all its prey<sup>2</sup> of all the haire arbans that were Cedar's mate, only a few dwelling remains shall be left; the Lord, the God of Israel has decreed it.

## CHAPTER 22

WHAT burden for the Valley of Revelation?<sup>3</sup> Here is great stir among the people, dash they eagerly to the house-top. What means this shouting everywhere, these thronged streets, as of a city that makes holiday? Also for thy dead, that were never slain by the sword, never died in battle: alas for rulers of thine, who with one accord have fled, or else been cruelly bound? Chariots for all that went left, and distant exile. Leave me, alas, leave me alone, to weep bitterly; never try to comfort me, now that this people of mine is widowed. Day of doom, when the Lord of hosts will have yonder Valley of Revelation defiled, overcome, throw into confusion a day to test its compare, and thenceon its dead<sup>4</sup> to aridness, to chariot, to horseman, thenceon its challenge, its shield come down from its place on the wall. Chariots up and down all the valleys thou leavest, horseman halted at thy gaze!

Here is Jude, then, stripped bare, quick, to the armory, there in the Fort House,<sup>5</sup> bring weapons at need. How many brethren, already, in the wall of David's city! What you must bring is from the lower pool; take rest of the houses in Jerusalem, pulling down some to build up in

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew form 'in Arabah' and 'in evening' differ from one another only slightly. The Hebrew text reads 'in Arabah' twice over some modern editions, on the contrary, give this prophecy the heading 'A burden (see, verse) at evening.'

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 15.1 above; the reference is perhaps to the time of year at which labourers were paid off.

<sup>3</sup> The 'Valley of Revelation' is clearly Jerusalem itself, but it is not clear in what period in its history the prophet refers, nor whether the disaster of which she fears there so little consciousness are already past, or still to come.

<sup>4</sup> 'A day to test its compare, and thenceon its dead' in the Hebrew text. It is possible to read proper names here, 'Cyr is undermining, and thence on the opposite side'—the two names being those of opposite sides to Assyria. Similarly in verse 8 we may understand, 'He is laying bare (that is, is getting ready) the shield.'

<sup>5</sup> See III Kg. 1.2.

12 the defences; you must find a bed between the two walls for the water  
 of the old pool to run. And all the while, no thought of him who made it  
 13 all, no eyes for him who fashioned it, long ago. On such a day as this the  
 Lord, the God of hosts, summons you to mourn and lament, to shave your  
 14 heads and wear sackcloth; and instead all is mirth and gladness, wine  
 killed here, men slaughtered there, meat being eaten and wine drunk,  
 15 come, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die! Praise it since in my  
 ear, the voice of the Lord of hosts, Never while you live shall this sin of  
 yours be pardoned.

16 A message from the Lord God of hosts; Up, to my house beside  
 thee, and find Soba, that has charge of the temple.<sup>1</sup> This he thy  
 17 word to him, What claim or kindred hast thou here, that thou shouldst  
 have out a burying-place for thyself? A tomb needfully hewed out in  
 18 the hill side, an open for thyself among the rocks? What wilt the Lord  
 19 trust thee then like a trusted foot, fold thee like a cloak, receive thee  
 down with misfortune, and trust thee like a bull into the great open  
 plain? There shalt thou lie, and there that chariot which is thy pride,  
 20 which is the shame of thy master's house. I mean to expel thee from  
 21 the rank thou holdest, deprive thee of thy office. And when that time  
 comes, I will summon one who is a true servant of mine, Eliacin the  
 22 son of Helchai, clothe him with thy robe, gird him with thy girdle,  
 entrust him with the power that once was thine, to rule all the children  
 23 of Jerusalem, all Juda's race, with a father's care. I will give him the  
 key of David's house to bear upon his shoulder; none may shut when  
 24 he opens, none open when he shuts.<sup>2</sup> I will fix him securely in his  
 25 place, like a peg that is to carry all the honour of his father's house;  
 all the honour of his father's house will rest upon him, as a man's goods  
 rest on a peg, the smaller of them, have a cooking-pot, have an instru-  
 26 ment of music. A day is coming, says the Lord of hosts, when the peg  
 that was once securely fixed will be dislodged from its place; suddenly  
 it must break and fall, and all that hung from it be ruined; the Lord  
 decrees it.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Of the temple' in the Hebrew text, 'of the house;' that is, probably, the royal palace.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 1-5.

<sup>3</sup> In the Hebrew text, the meaning of verses 25-27 is obscure; our text follows agreed, whether the peg that is to be dislodged from its place is Eliacin himself, at a later time, or Soba, his predecessor in office.



## CHAPTER 23

WHAT haunts the Tyre? Moans aloud, wailing-gone ships,<sup>1</sup> that  
 reach Cyprus to learn that the house you left is in ruins! Stand they  
 aghast, decline in the coast land that once was thronged with Sidonian  
 merchants, that gathered its revenues from far over seas; grief of Egypt's  
 seeing, of the Nile's aching, haunted they among the nations. Fear  
 Siles, by false hopes betrayed! A cry comes up from the sea, from her  
 that was guardian of the sea, Not for me a mother's joys, a mother's  
 pangs; never a son reared, never a maid brought to wedded bed. Here is  
 news for Egypt, news from Tyre that shall grip her with despair! On out  
 on your woe's voyage, decline on the coast land, mourning aloud; your  
 city falls, the same city that had so long boasted of her mastery. For  
 her downfall there is a journey to make on foot, a distant journey. Who  
 was it plotted the downfall of Tyre, a city once so rich in arrows, whose  
 merchants were princes, whose traffickers were among the great men  
 of the earth? He, the Lord of hosts, designed it; who else drags in the snare  
 the haunter's pride, brings all the great men of the earth into derision?

Dragon of ocean,<sup>2</sup> loaded the land must be as Egypt; in the strife  
 of strength thou hast it slain as mine. The Lord's hand, now, is  
 stretched out over the sea itself, throwing all the kingdoms into dismay;  
 his work has gone out against Chanaan, that all its strongholds should  
 be brought to nothing. Siles, poor queen the sea's, boast no more  
 of thy singularity; thy name is tarnished now. Cease the sea, and break  
 thyself to Cyprus if thou wilt; even there thou shalt find no rest. Her  
 resting-place is the land of the Chaldeans, where Assur has founded  
 a nation strong as he neverdies ever was; nation that has carried off her  
 women into captivity, undermined her palace, made her into a heap of

<sup>1</sup> 'Wailing-gone ships'; in the Hebrew text, 'ships of Tharshish', and so in various  
 revised Ap. Versions. The port of Tharshish is uncertain, but it is generally identified  
 with Tartessus, on the Western coast of Spain. In that case a 'ship of Tharshish'  
 would have to be one capable of crossing the sea to the Atlantic.

<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'Dragon of Tharshish'. This is understood by some  
 as meaning that Tharshish, once Tyre had fallen, would enjoy complete liberty  
 after 'grief' being interpreted as meaning the removal of foreign dominion.  
 But there is no evidence that Tartessus was in any sense a colony of Tyre;  
 it was only a trading station. The prophet, then, seems to be concluding with  
 Tartessus on the loss of her empire, so he concludes with Egypt in verse 2  
 on the loss of her empire. Tharshish will also have to give her own foot: this  
 is the word implied by the rendering given in the Authorized Greek, 'Till thy own  
 foot, for no more vessels will come to thee from Carthage.'

- 11 rains.<sup>1</sup> Movers slow, ocean-going ships, your stronghold is laid waste.  
 12 After this there will be forgotten, then city of Tyre, for seventy  
 years, long as the life-time of one of thy kings. At the end of those  
 13 seventy years, Tyre will know the meaning of the harlot's song. Take  
 thy harp and go round the streets, poor harlot forgotten; now for thy  
 best notes, now for thy whole store of music, as being there back late  
 14 remembered! At the end of those seventy years, the Lord will select  
 towards Tyre, and send her back to her trafficking; all the world over,  
 with all the world's kingdoms, she shall play the harlot once more.  
 15 But now the revenues of her trafficking shall be devoted to the Lord's  
 use, not hoarded up and held by, revenue she shall earn, but for Zion's  
 folk, the Lord's servants, to give them food in abundance, and double  
 clothing.

## CHAPTER 24

- 1 **L**OOK you, the Lord means to make earth a void, a wilderness; to  
 2 let out of shape, and scarce its inhabitants far and wide. One law for  
 price and people, for master and servant, for mistress and maid; for  
 seller and buyer, for borrower and lender, for debtor and creditor of debt.  
 3 Earth drained to its dregs, earth ravaged and razed; such dooms the  
 4 Lord has uttered. Earth wastebags and withered, a world that withers  
 and grows futile; how futile they have grown now, the great ones of the  
 5 world! Poor earth, polluted by the men that dwell on it, they have broken  
 God's law, transgressed the decree he made for them, violated his eternal  
 6 covenant with man; punished him by a curse, plagued with guilty men,  
 7 only a frantic remnant left<sup>2</sup> of its inhabitants. Wastebags the vineyard,  
 8 withered now the vine, haunts sighing that once were merry; silent the  
 gay tambour, hushed the noise of holiday-making, silent the harp's mirth.  
 9 No more freeling and song; the wine turns bitter in their mouths. The  
 whole earth is like a city razed and ruined, where every house decays  
 10 and ruins, and a cry goes up in the streets because all the wine is spent,  
 11 the mirth forsaken, the joy vanished, a city left to desolation, with ruin  
 fallen upon its gates.  
 12 In the midst of the wide earth, among these many peoples, what  
 shall be left? A remnant, the best olive that are shaken from the tree,  
 13 the gleanings that remain when vintage-time is over. Few only, but they  
 shall lift up their voices in praise; God's house undecayed, their

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text here is different, and the interpretation of it is much disputed. It gives 'the mixed crowd' for 'the razed off her warriors.'

<sup>2</sup> 'A frantic remnant left' in the Hebrew text, 'they will be burned up till few of them are left.'

rejoicing shall be heard across the sea. Give glory to God, whose is knowledge of him is revealed;<sup>1</sup> praise to the God of Israel among the distant isles. Hark at the ends of the earth his song of triumph has reached us, the hosts of his fleet.<sup>2</sup> Hark, keep thy secrets, hark, keep thy name; no secret of that.

For alas, the truceless will betray his cause; treachery is treachery still, and its fruit is treason. For the dwellers on earth, dishonest, pit and it more unshame them; but they from peril, they shall fall into the pit, or for they from the pit, they shall be held fast in the snare. The flood-gates of heaven will be opened, and the foundations of earth rock; earth is near to rot and shiver, earth torn and scattered, earth must quiver and quake, earth rolling and reeling like a drunkard, earth unsteady like a vessel that shivers that is gone in a night, bowed down by the weight of its own guilt, till it falls, never to rise again. When that day comes, as the Lord will hold a reckoning with the hosts of heaven, there above, with the kings of the earth, here on earth, buddled together, as suppers as are buddled together is a danger, they shall remain prisoners; so, at last, the reckoning will be held. And then the Lord of hosts will reign at Jerusalem, on mount Zion; and the moon will be put to shame, and the sun hide his face, before the glory in which he will appear then, with the chiefs of his people about him.

## CHAPTER 25

**L**ORD, thou art my God; I smelt thee and praise thy name for thy wonderful designs; for thy designs, so long prepared, so faithfully executed, see, it is done! A heap of stones where, but for thy device, a town stood; a crumbling ruin, all that is left of a walled city, a fortress of the invader, dismantled now and never to be built again. What wonder great nations should do their homage, embowed cities hold thee in dread! Stronghold thou art of the poor, stronghold of the helpless in their affliction, refuge from the storm, shade in the noonday sun; against that wall the rage of tyrants blossoms in vain. Upstart of the invader rolled, as it

<sup>1</sup> "Thou knowledge of him is revealed", literally 'in the doorkins,' the Hebrew word being that used for the window embrasure of the high priest's breastplate. Its literal meaning is 'light,' and some think it is here used poetically for 'the sun.'

<sup>2</sup> 'His fleet', that is, either the Hebrew, or the scattered people generally. The words which follow are obscure in the Hebrew, and some think the meaning is, 'My weakness, my weakness' (literally, 'my weakness'). If this translation is right, the words are more correctly taken with what follows than with what precedes them.

were the brethren summer of a parched land; oppressors withered up from the roots, like hair of burning heat.<sup>1</sup>

- 4 A time is coming when the Lord of hosts will prepare a banquet  
as this multitude of ones; no meat no tender, no wine no mallow, meat  
that drips with fat, wine well vinified. Goad the chains in which he  
has bound the peoples, the veil that covered the nations' hideousness; on  
6 the mountain side, all these will be engulfed: death, too, shall be  
engulfed for ever. No fattened chest but the Lord God will wipe away  
in tears; gone the contempt his people endured in a whole world's  
eyes; the Lord has promised it.  
8 When that day comes, men will be saying, He is here, the God to  
whom we looked for help, the Lord for whom we asked so patiently;  
10 sure to rejoice, sure to triumph in the victory he has won us. On  
prouder mountains the divine deliverance shall run, and by his power  
12 Mount shall be crushed, like straw ground in the chaff-cutter? Mount  
shall scorch out his hands, like a man withering, and low shall his  
14 pride fall when they crash down to earth? Down they must come,  
the battlements that crown those walls, the inglorious in the dust.

## CHAPTER 24

- B**UT in the land of Jude, when that day comes, what shall their song  
be? Zion is sure, an impregnable fortress; divine protection it has for  
1 wall and breast-work: wide let its gates be opened, its welcome true  
2 hearts that still keep truth with him. Our thoughts wayward no longer,  
there will maintain us in peace, peace that comes surely to those who  
4 trust in thee. Yours to trust in the Lord constantly, the Lord that is  
5 evermore your protection. Mountains-dwellers he can bring low, teeter-  
ing city walls he can level, level them with the ground, drag them down  
6 to the dust. There they lie, trodden under foot; poor folk trample on  
them now, the dishevelled spurn them as they pass.  
7 Where hurt is true, path lies plain; level the road he treads that  
8 wins acceptance with thee. And we, Lord, we have kept to the path  
thou hast decreed for us, waiting for thee still longing we had none

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text here is difficult, and may perhaps be corrupt; for 'oppressors withered up from the roots' it has 'bring low the ring of the oppressors.'

<sup>2</sup> For 'ground in the chaff-cutter' the Hebrew text has 'trodden down in the dung-hill' (or perhaps, the-mud-pool).

<sup>3</sup> It is not clear, either in the Latin or in the Hebrew text, to be certain what the subject of the verb is, or what the passive picture is meant to set. In the Latin it is, apparently, that of a man who puts out his hands to save himself from falling, but unsuccessfully.

but for thy greater renown. All through the night my soul has yearned<sup>1</sup> for thee, to show my lament openly, yearning for the dawn; with thee will escape thy decree as earth, and the whole world shall know how you thou art. The godless will not learn this lesson from many thorns as thine; in a land that is all holiness, they will pervert justice still, no eyes for the Lord's majesty. Hand of thine which threatened them, heed<sup>2</sup> they would now heed now they mock, those scornful eyes, and in their own confusion; they shall see the conquest thy enemies! Thou wilt<sup>3</sup> busy thyself, Lord, to make peace for us; what achievement of man but the doing of it is thine?

O Lord our God, masters we have had a many in place of thee, it has only thy name shall be held in remembrance; live they cannot nor survive, gone down as death with the heroes of long ago; thou hast called them to account, and made an end of them, till the very memory of their names has vanished. Didst thou win thyself honour, Lord, when thou didst show favour, such high favour, to thy people, when thou didst enlarge all the borders of thy land? No, Lord, it was in affliction they turned back to thee; in silent hours of suffering thy chastisement reached them.<sup>4</sup> We were no better than women with a child that is near her time, ready to cry out dolourfully in her pangs each for thou hast given us. Conceived we, yes, and travailed, yet is nothing brought forth but wind; not through us came deliverance to our country, not through us were the peoples of the world cut down.<sup>5</sup>

Perish life they shall have, Lord, that are thine in death lost to us, as they shall live again. Again and unto your praises, you that dwell in the firm. The dew that waters, Lord, shall bring light to them; only the land of dead heroes there will doom us overthrow.

Up then, my people, to your numerous chambers beside you; shut as yourselves within doors; hide for a while, until the time of retribution is past. See, where the Lord comes out from his dwelling-place, behold in the regions of the world to account for their guilt earth shall disclose the blood spilt on it, and no more cover its dead.

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, there is no sign that this is meant to be a *question* but the answer: 'Thou didst win honour' is more difficult to fit into the context.

<sup>2</sup> 'In silent hours of suffering thy chastisement reached them'; this is the sense indicated by 26 verses. The phrase runs, literally, 'Thy chastisement (came) to them in the affliction of a whisper'; the Hebrew text gives the equally difficult sense, 'they pressed out a whisper; thy chastisement (came) to them.'

<sup>3</sup> The last clause in this verse is understood by some as meaning 'not through us were (our) inhabitants born in the land'; the sense suggested is that the small numbers of the surviving Jews will be supernaturally increased by a resurrection. But there is no other instance of the word 'to kill' meaning 'to be born'; taken in the same sense, where the same scholars would translate 'there will come the land of dead heroes to be reborn.'

## CHAPTER 37

**H**ARD and heavy and strong that sword is which the Lord carries, shall he not wreak his vengeance, in due time, upon the monstrous serpent that bars the gate, and the monstrous serpent that coils up yonder? shall he not deal death to the great beast of the sea? And the genius of his doings shall be sung by his own vineyard, a vineyard rich in wine.

1 I, the Lord, am the keeper of this vineyard; I come soon to water it. Day by day I watch over it, to shield it from attack, nor any grudge my heart bears it. Would I were an enemy as relentless as thorns and briars are! Then I would trample it down and make a bonfire of it. But now, see how it clings to my protection! Ay, it shall have peace, it shall make its peace with me. Israel shall flourish and put forth shoots, multitudes that shall be added to the number of Jacob; with its offspring the wide face of earth shall be peopled.

2 What, should the Lord scold Israel as he scolds his enemies? Destroy it, like those others he doomed to overthrow? Nay, cast her army to naught, but there should be due measure in her punishment; not for nothing did he expose her to cruel wind and burning heat,\* as should the race of Jacob find pardon for its sins. Cleansed now from guilt, to bear fruit in full abundance; ground fine as chalk the altars, pillars and shrines raised up no more!

3 Hinnemlé, the city that once was fortified must be desolate, forsaken, that fair dwelling-place, abandoned, part of the wilderness; a castle will bow to and lie down, and creep the tall bushes up it; nothing that grows there but will wither and be snipped off. Women shall be their teachers;† so foolish has this nation grown, too foolish for its own maker to pity, for its own creator to spare. But a time is coming,

\* The enemies of Israel are probably alluded to here under symbolic names, but they cannot be identified with any certainty.

† So the Latin version, which seems to suggest, rhetorically, that God is reluctantly unable to abandon his people. Some, supposing a very natural construction in the Hebrew, translate, "Would that I had thorns and briars for my enemies."

\* In the Latin, the second half of this verse reads literally, 'he smothered with his hand heretics in the day of wrath.' The Hebrew seems to mean, 'he consumed them with his fierce wind, at the season of the drought.'

† 'Women shall be their teachers'; in the Hebrew text, the meaning generally understood is 'women shall cook and eat it i.e., the vegetation just mentioned on fire.'

when the Lord will beat the fruit from his trees,<sup>1</sup> as far away as the land of Euphrates and the river of Egypt, and you, sons of Israel, shall be gathered in one by one. That day, a rill will be rounded as a great trumpet, and men long lost will come from Assyria, and culms from Egypt, to worship the Lord on his holy mountain, in Jerusalem.

## CHAPTER 28

**O**UT upon the drunken lords of Ephraim, and the city that is their boast, their crown! Quickly shall it fall, this flower, in the pride of its beauty. Certain they dwell at the head of yonder fruitful valley, all besotted with their wine: and the Lord will come upon them like a south, a hot, scorching wind, like a desolating whirlwind, like a swift flood that rises and spreads out over the plain. Trodden under foot is shall be, the crown that was denser, Ephraim's boast; that flower, whose brief bloom once delighted him, shall look down over the freighted valley no more. Fig ripens as he cuts, that ripens are scarred; things the harvest, no sooner seen than plucked and eaten by the first that pass by!

But the Lord has his own people still left him: so stout he shall be a crown to boast of, a garland of pride; his the justice inspires them when they sit in judgement; his the courage that rallies them when they fall back, fighting to the goal.

What, then, men! These are-fuddled with wine, benumbed with their swelling? High revel they hold, priest and prophet together, till all are fuddled and sodden with wine, their wits benumbed; what wonder if the true ever goes unrecognized, if justice is forgotten? No man is left at their tables for sight but diths and vocals. Here is one (they say) has knowledge to impart,<sup>2</sup> has a message to make known, to whom? Does he think we are children new-muzzed, fresh from their mothers' milk? It is over, Past the word on, past the word on, Wain a while yet, wain a while yet, A word with you, here, A word with you, there! There is stammering speech, here is childish talk for one folk to listen to! Yet he did but counsel rest and repose; not cause strife, repeat words to others, than to give counsel to a weary nation. And then they would

<sup>1</sup> Or possibly 'beat out (threshing) his ears of corn.'

<sup>2</sup> In verse 9-12, the prophet evidently refers a personal experience. It seems as if the drunken nobles of Jerusalem had mocked him, over their wine, with always repeating the same 'catch' phrases, like one maddening children to quell, or a mountaineer who can get no further with his mountain, or a hardliner who cannot reason himself. Some think that 'he' in verse 11 is Manasseh God, who will 'speak to' his people through a foreign invasion. But it seems simpler to understand it of the prophet himself.

- 12 *And to them, the Lord's message was all Pass the word on, pass the word on, Wait a while yet, wait a while yet, A word with you, here, and a word with you, there! And so they will go on their way, so shameless backsliders and hosts their hosts, to fall into a trap and be there caught.*
- 13 *Hear the Lord's word, then, you modern, that bear rule over my people in Jerusalem. Did you think to make terms with death, enter into alliance with the grave itself, that the flood of ruin should pass by you by, so confident in your vain hopes, so armed with illusion? A message to you, then, from the Lord God, See, I am laying a stone in the foundations of Zion that has been tested and found true, a cornerstone, a stone of worth, built into the foundations themselves.<sup>1</sup> Happy are and free who will finish houses better. You shall have justice dealt out to you by weight, your measures shall be strictly measured; shattered, the vain hopes, as by a storm of hail, burst the illusion as by a deluge.*
- 14 *Hold they shall not, your terms with death, your compact with the grave; when the flood of ruin sweeps past, it shall leave you perished. It will carry you away as it passes; pass it will, suddenly, in the space of a day and a night, and the very alarm of it will make you understand as the rushing at last. Too narrow a bed, and one or the other must be full out; a short cloak is on covering for two.<sup>2</sup> Who stands there? None other than the Lord himself, as he stood once on the mountains of Marston,<sup>3</sup> wretched still, as when he stood in the valley at Gethsemane, but now, his own purpose to achieve, he leads himself to the purpose of another, now his will is, to let the stern have his will. Mark, then, no more, if you would not see your shoes slipped righter; the Lord God of hosts is my witness, he means to make a short and sharp reckoning with the whole earth.*
- 15 *Listen now, and give me a hearing, mark well the message I bring. Though the fiercest man, as he now, but will be he ever ploughing? Is his box and sowing is there no rest? Nay, he will water it now, plant forest, sow cornfields, with a bushy of olive or hazel, miller or vetch; such has he has learned, such produces his God has given him. What, shall sledge crush the fenced seed, shattering-wheel pass to and fro*

<sup>1</sup> In verses 13 and 14 the reference, according to some, is to those Jews who put their trust in a professed alliance with Herod against Antipater (cf. ch. 31 below). We know nothing about the cornerstone, except that the prophet refers here, at least indirectly, to our Lord's saying (cf. Matt. 21.42, where the verse ends 'The believer will not be disappointed' instead of 'Happy to see the who will finish houses better').

<sup>2</sup> This is clearly a proverb, intended to justify God's design in making some of the Jewish people, opposing others.

<sup>3</sup> 'The mountains of Marston,' that is, Beth Parana, II Reg. 2.40; for Gethsemane, see Jos. 10.10. The same God who once taught for his people will now carry out his purposes by granting success, for the stern being, to shatter Jerusalem.



over the carcass? A reverb for the forest, a nod for the carcass, and they shall be beaten enough. Threshed the corn must be, sure is enough, yet not for sure does the wheel harry it, do the spurs wear it down.<sup>2</sup> This lesson, too, the Lord would teach us; learn we how is wonderful are his designs, how high above us his dealings.

## CHAPTER 29

**O**UT upon her, Ariel,<sup>3</sup> the lion-city King David stormed long ago! This year once added to the tale of years, feast-days of it over and gone, I will lay siege to Ariel, that shall roar and rear again, a lion-city indeed. Trust me, I will ring thee round, thence up earth-works against thee, an engine in place to besiege thee. Cover down thee now, and offer purity from the north, where thou livest, from the ruins thy voice will make itself heard, no better than a whispering from the ground, as it were some ghost that haunted there under the earth.

Then, like the dawn, the hordes that scoured thee shall vanish; like a spark that smoulders, thy conquerors shall die away. Suddenly, in a moment, the Lord will sweep down upon them in thunder, and earthquake, in a storm of roaring wind, in fire that consumes all before it; gone, the thronging nations that fought against Ariel, like a dream that passes with the night; gone, the fighting, and the siege, and their triumph. Dreams hungry men of a full belly, then wakes empty as ever; dreams thirsty men of a cool draught, then wakes weary, and thirsty, and still unsatisfied! Such comfort shall be theirs, the many folk that beleaguered thee.

Ay, gaze and gaze as you will, learn and learn you, because see you lifted up, hoisted ere you have been at your wine, banquet with never a taste of drink! So deep a lethargy the Lord sends, blinding is the prophesy that should be your eyes, smothering with a veil the wise words that should see visions for you. What is revelation to you, but as a sealed book, offered in vain to scholar that finds it sealed, as to your divines, that won't be never learned his lessons? This people, the Lord says, makes profession of worshipping me, does me honour with its lips, but its heart is far from me.<sup>4</sup> If they fear me, it is a lesson

<sup>2</sup> It is not certain whether this passage in verses 27-28 is meant to explain the meretricious prediction God shows in his judgement, or to recommend a less oppressive policy to the Jewish rulers (cf. verse 15 above).

<sup>3</sup> Ariel is generally interpreted as meaning, Lion of God. It is noteworthy that used as a name for Jerusalem, and we certainly can't be full about the cause of the passage.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Mt. 23:4.

- 11 they learned from human precepts. What remains but some great,  
 some astounding miracle, to strike awe into such hearts as these! Surely  
 of wisdom their wise men shall be, cunning of their counsels: verily.  
 12 Oer on you, that would hide your designs from the Lord in the depth  
 of your hearts, plotting us in the dark and telling yourselves none  
 13 can see, none can find you out! What a strange thought is this! As  
 well might they scheme against the potter, handicraft chosen to crafts-  
 man, or thing of art call the artist fool.  
 14 Short the time shall be, and quickly fled, ere Lebanon's forest shall  
 be fruitful as Carmel, ere land fruitful now shall be reckoned as forest.  
 15 Then this look will have a message for deaf ears to hear, for blind  
 16 eyes to see through the mists that darken them; humble folk shall  
 yet learn to rejoice in the Lord, poor souls of such triumph in the  
 17 Holy One of Israel. Vanished, the triumphs for, scornful incredulity  
 is silenced; where are they now, that spent themselves on wrong-  
 18 doing, working a man's words to convict him of guilt, defrauding  
 him of justice as the city goes, setting aside, with a quibble, the plea  
 19 of the innocent? Here is a message to the race of Jacob from the Lord,  
 that was Abraham's deliverer: No longer shall Jacob be disappointed,  
 20 no longer put to the blush. He shall see children of his, my gift, doing  
 become publicly to my name; honour to the Holy One of Jacob, homage  
 21 to the God of Israel! Reckless hearts will attain true knowledge then,  
 and the wisest men learn wisdom.

## CHAPTER 30

- O**UT upon you, the Lord says, what treason is this? How he plans  
 aforesaid that woe-women mine, make a-wasting, and the pattern some of  
 1 my choice. Trust me, you do but add to your guilt. What are these  
 journeyings down into Egypt, and I never censured? Think you ye find  
 2 refuge in the strength of Pharaoh, look you to Egypt for shelter? Strength  
 of Pharaoh shall play you false, ere shelter Egypt bring you, but shame.  
 3 Fittest of things is Truth, ambassadors from thee making their way to  
 4 Hanaan! Prudless aimed to a folk that could not save them, no help, no  
 comfort there, only failure and mockery.  
 5 What burden for the cattle-driven to the south? Here is a land of  
 difficulty and danger, house of lies and limbo, of viper and flying  
 serpent; and through it, goods piled on asses' backs, incense moved  
 on the trumps of camels, go men asking for help where help is none.  
 6 From Egypt's protection you shall have neither gain nor good; my  
 7 word has been said about her, There goes Pharaoh, let her alone. Go

home, then, and returns it as a tablet of law-word for their instruction; write it down, see, carefully as a scroll, as he an abiding record in after days. So rebellious a people is this, so unobedient a breed, so refusing, my own children, to listen to the law of their Gods: forbidding to the people to prophesy, the men of vision to have vision of the truth. Even they must be told what lies, then best, comforted in their blindness, for them no marching order, no prescribed path; he, the Holy One of Israel, must be kept far from their view.

From him, the Holy One of Israel, this message: Warning of what is to come rejected, so blindly you trust your own cunning, your own brotherhood will. Sudden and swift shall be your punishment, as the crash of a high wall that has long gaped ruinously, long been anxiously watched. So cleared a blow never dealt, shivering masonry is got into fragments, all no shape is left that will carry a lighted coal from the hearth, or a mouthful of water from the cistern. From the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, word was given you, Come back and keep still, and all shall be well with you; in quietness and in confidence lies your strength. But you would have none of it; To Israel as you cried, We must flee and flee you shall; We must ride swiftly, you will; but neither will ride your passengers. Be you a thousand to one, yet is the challenge of five men you shall win no fight; enough left of you but a remnant, hardly as flag-staff on the mountain top, as beacon on the hill.

What if the Lord waits his time before he will have mercy on you? The more glorious, when it comes, his deliverance. The Lord is a God who makes oaths good, blessed they shall be that wait for him. In Jerusalem day only will be left, true children of Zion. And then, Jerusalem, thou shalt have none to shield mercy is none he shall withhold. Soon as he hears thee crying out to him, the answer will come. Broad as the Lord will pass, though it be sparingly, water, though it be in short measure. Birds of passage they shall be no longer; the sea he gives thee for thy牧场; always thou wilt have a true counsellor in sight, always hear his voice in thy ear as he warns thee, This is the true is path, follow it; no swerving to right or left.

Silver leaf on thy graves images defaced now, defaced the sheath of gold thou wilt cut all away, as a woman cuts away defaced dress of lace, and bid it begone. And therefore, now where thou wilt all over is the land, mine shall be granted to thy crops; rich and full shall be thy harvest of wheat; thou shalt have pasture, thou, for lambs to browse in at liberty. On and on on thy flocks shall have mixed feed, pure grain as

<sup>1</sup> "Birds of passage they shall be no longer": the Hebrew text is more correctly interpreted as meaning, "no longer laid away in corners."

- 11 flesh witnesseth on the thrashing-floor, never a mountain top, never  
 a high hill, but will flow with torrents of water, when that day cometh.  
 The dead shall lie in heaps that day, and rivers come crashing down;  
 12 noon's light will be like the light of the sun, and the sun will shine  
 in sevenfold strength, as if the light of seven days were joined in one,  
 when the time comes for the Lord to bind up his people's hurt, and heal  
 their grievous wound.  
 13 See where the majesty of the Lord comes from far away; his anger  
 is aflame, and there is no withstanding it! There is merriment on his lips,  
 14 his tongue is like a consuming fire, and his breath like a mountain  
 stream that floods over till it is neck-deep. He will sweep away whole  
 nations into oblivion, sweep away the bridle of falsehood that curbed  
 15 the peoples till now.<sup>1</sup> But, you, that night, will be slaying for joy,  
 as if it were the night when a valiant host began; your horses will  
 be light, as men's hearts are light when they go up, with the flutes  
 playing about them, to the mountain of the Lord, where he dwells,  
 16 the strong God of Israel. The Lord will make his dread voice heard,  
 will lay bare his terrible arm, volleying out his anger in flashes of  
 devouring fire, laying all low with his whirlwind, with his hail-storm;  
 17 and Armer will shrink in fear from the Lord's voice, and will flee his  
 18 red. So it is decreed that the red should pass over him, brought down  
 on him by the Lord's hand to the music of your timbrels and harps;  
 19 a strange warfare this,<sup>2</sup> that shall quell them! In their time a new  
 Topkath<sup>3</sup> has been made ready; this, too, made ready by a king. It is  
 deep and wide, fed with flaming brands in abundance; and the breath  
 of the Lord comes down like a stream of brimstone, to kindle it.

## CHAPTER 31

- OUT upon you, that hanker yourselves to Egypt for rescued Moses  
 must be your speed in the hour of peril; great army of chariots you  
 must have, and horsemen without number, to bring you confidence; to  
 the Holy One of Israel turn you never, confidence in the Lord is none.  
 2 And yet he too is a wise counsellor; heings he trouble to a man's door, he

<sup>1</sup> It is not certain, here, what is meant by a 'bridle of falsehood'; nor is it clear from the Hebrew text whether it is something the Lord will destroy (usually, 'witness away's, or something which he will impose.

<sup>2</sup> 'A strange warfare'; in the Hebrew text, 'a warfare of meeting.'

<sup>3</sup> Topkath was the name given to a place where human sacrifices were brought to Moloch, 'the King.' The burning of Sennacherib's dead soldiers will be a new Topkath, prepared according to the Hebrew text; 'for a king'; but the Latin version gives a better sense, if we understand the King to be Sloughy God.

does not lightly change his purposes; do let not he will take arms against a  
 rebellious race, the unbelly situation bring to nothing. Strength of Egypt  
 is human, not divine; its horses are weak flesh, not immortal spirits; one  
 movement of the Lord's hand, and down comes reiver, down falls the  
 reared, to lie there forgotten. A promise from the Lord God? Here is  
 lion, or cub of a lion, growling over his prey, what though the shepherds  
 rally, and go out to meet him? Nothing cares he for their shouts, it is not  
 awed by their numbers. So it will be with the Lord of hosts, when he  
 comes down to war, like no mortal Goliath, with his own hill-side for battle-  
 ground. As parent bird hovers overnest, so will the Lord of hosts protect  
 Jerusalem; prevent her and bring her safe through, grant signal deliver-  
 ance. Come back, sons of Israel, that have hidden yourselves away so  
 deep.

Then, then, for each man to cast away his idols of gold and silver,  
 idols your guilty hands have made. Not by the sword of man Aveng-  
 er shall fall, earthly weapon is none shall bound it down him. Free he may  
 ere sword threaten him, and never warrior of his be left, but to slavery;  
 All that stubborn strength of his by terror unmanned, all his princes  
 fled away! Such conflict the Lord sends to Zion, where his fire is lit,  
 to Jerusalem, where glows his furnace.

## CHAPTER 31

SEE, where a king rules his folk justly! His nobles, too, make right  
 onward! to them men look, as for shelter against the wind, cover as a  
 storm; for mantling storms in drought, shade of something rock in a  
 parched land. Eyes stay will have to see with, no darkness there; men  
 that are trained to listen attentively, make words shall loose wise  
 thoughts, the swarming tongue speak out readily and clear. Noble rank  
 shall no longer be for the reckless, or kindly titles for the crafty. The  
 reckless man, that speaks ever recklessly, his heart set on mischief, will  
 fall of empty show, and blasphemy against the Lord; food to the hungry,  
 drink to the thirsty drying still! And the crafty man, an ill craft is his,  
 false plans devising to ruin harmless folk, cheat the poor of their right!  
 From a noble nation spring noble acts, this is cause to greatness higher  
 than this.

Bless ye, her ladies, and heres; for ours untroubled by alarm

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<sup>1</sup> Verses 1-8 are generally understood as a prophecy, viz. of the reforming  
 activities of King Hezekiah. But they may be read simply as an expression of  
 generalised wishes and indeed the whole tone of these verses fits of the Wisdom  
 literature.

10 I have a message. Swiftly the days pass, the year goes round, and  
 you shall have trouble enough, untruce foretelling, when the vintage  
 11 falls, and no fruit-harvest comes. Bewildered, the minds that were  
 once at ease, full of freshening, those untroubled hearts; you must  
 go stripped and shame-faced now, with wistfulness about your home,  
 12 mourn for lost fruitfulness, for the fields now so teeming, for the vine-  
 yards that bore so well. That thorns and briars should come up in  
 13 these lands of yours; come up over haunts you loved in the day that was  
 all world happy, now, the palace, fragrant, the town of younger men;  
 nothing but gloom, where a man must pick his way through cactus-  
 encumbered, level haunts of the wild ox, a pasture-ground for the flock.  
 14 All this, until the spirit is poured out on us from above; fruitful  
 as Canaan then the wilderness, to make your well-filled lands waste  
 15 but waste. Alike desert and fruitful field the home, now, of innocence,  
 16 the shade of loyalty; loyalty, that has peace for its crown, tranquillity for  
 17 its harvest, repose for ever undisturbed. In quiet homes this people of  
 mine shall live, in dwelling-places that fear no attack; all shall be sure  
 18 and plenty. But first the hail-storm must do its work, first be laid low,  
 19 city levelled with the ground. Ah, blessed men, their seed sowing, their  
 ones and ones driving, by every stream that flows?<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER 38

**W**HAT, splendour of the nations, unphased still? Proud lord of  
 others, does none dispute thy lordship? A time comes when thou  
 must cease plundering, and thyself be plundered, when of lordship thou  
 1 hast had enough, and others lend it over thee. Have mercy on us, Lord,  
 that wait for thee so patiently; day after day be our stronghold, our  
 deliverer thou in time of trouble!  
 2 Flew, the alien host, scattered the heathen, thy angel's voice<sup>2</sup> once  
 3 heard, thy power made manifest! Your spoils, Gentiles, how easily  
 amassed! Easily as the locusts, where they swarm is the treasure.  
 4 The Lord's power made manifest, that is thrown high in heaven!  
 5 With his just arm slain shall be well content; will in those times  
 of ours<sup>3</sup> the promise well kept, the full deliverance. Knowledge and  
 wisdom and the fear of the Lord, what treasure like these?<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'gloom and a grasping over cactus.' The Hebrew text seems to refer to cactus, 'Opuntia' and the words *ones* shall be translated into cactus.

<sup>2</sup> It is not clear whether this refers to the victory which God's people are here to enjoy, or whether it is a promise whose meaning is now lost to us.

<sup>3</sup> 'The angel' in the Hebrew text, 'a messenger.'

<sup>4</sup> 'Of ours'; literally, 'of mine'; the prophet addressing (it seems) an imaginary contemporary of his own.

See, where they stand at the gates, the men we sent out to report;<sup>1</sup> calling us; the messengers we sent to ask for peace;<sup>2</sup> wailing bitterly: Demanded, the highways, the lanes overgrown; the enemy has broken the track, making no terms with the chiefs, nor sparing the lives of men: widowed the countryside and hillsides, Lebanon shrank and is withered, Sharon a wilderness, Bezer and Carmel quaking with fear. Now, the Lord says, to baste myself, now to rise up in wrath against them, now to make them feel my power! A raging fire consumed in the winds, and nothing but scorching brought to the birth; your own impetuous spirit shall be a fire, Gentiles, to devour you: that which is in a kiln they shall be left, the alien border, bundles of brushwood crumpled up by the fire.

Listen then, you that live far off, to the story of my doings; and you, who dwell close to me, learn the lesson of my power. In Zion itself<sup>3</sup> there be guilty folk that trouble, false hearts full of dismay; who shall survive this devouring flame, the near presence of fires that burn unconquering? He only, that follows the path of innocence, tells truth, to ill-gotten gain refuses, flings back the bribe; his ears shut to scandalous conceals, his eyes from every harmful sight turned away. On the heights his dwelling shall be, his eyes among the fastnesses of the rocks, bread shall be his for the asking, water from an unfailing spring. Three eyes shall look on the king in his royal beauty, have sight of a land whose frontiers are far away.

Of those old fires, how those will recall the memory! Where are ye day now, the learned men, that could weigh each phrase of the law, that taught us the children?<sup>4</sup> No longer with them are before thee a rebellious people,<sup>5</sup> all professed talk that passes by comprehension, and no wisdom. Look around thee at Zion, goal of our pilgrimage, as we where Jerusalem lies, an undisturbed dwelling-place; here is seat securely fixed, its path inaccessible, its gates never to be broken down, as nowhere else, our Lord reigns in majesty; a place of rivers, as of wide, open streams, yet no ship's war will disturb it, no huge galleon pass by: the Lord our judge, the Lord our laughter, the Lord our

<sup>1</sup> "The men we sent out to report," literally, "those who saw," but it does not seem probable that the phrase refers here, as it often does, to the prophets. The Hebrew text differs, and its meaning is much obscured.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, "The angels (or messengers) of peace."

<sup>3</sup> According to the Hebrew text, the prophet asks what has become of the teachers, the men who weighed our money, to buy off Assyria, the men who caused the sowing of Jerusalem.

<sup>4</sup> A rebellious people! this word, nowhere else found, is understood by some modern scholars to be the word of "barbarians," and the whole verse is taken as referring to the Assyrians.

king, will himself be our deliverance. Now, thy single force loose  
 and unassailable, we wait thy move to display thy power; then,  
 thou wilt have the spoil of many forces to divide, even lame folk shall  
 carry plunder away. No more shall they cry out on their helpless  
 plight, then, thy fellow citizens; none dwell there now but is assailed  
 of his gate.

## CHAPTER 34

NATIONS, come near and listen, here is news for all mankind; give  
 heed the whole world thou, and all that lives on it, earth and all  
 earth breeds. On all nations the Lord will be avenged, never as scored  
 lost but must feel the blow, forfeit, all of them, and doomed to perish.  
 See where they lie slain, their corpses polluting the site, the very hills  
 roused away with their blood! Piled they into nothing, powder heavenly  
 powers, shivered, like a scroll, the heavens themselves, nor any star there  
 but must wither, as leaf withers on vine or fig-tree; in the very heavens  
 my sword shall drink deep of blood. On Edom doubt not it shall fall,  
 death-sentence to execute, the sword of the Lord, gleamed with blood!  
 Well acquainted with fat, when it drank the blood of lambs and goats, of  
 scaled man! There are victims ready for the Lord in Beers; great  
 slaughter then shall be in the land of Edom. Down go the wild bulls with  
 the rest, the bullocks, leaders of the herd; none must be sudden with  
 their blood, sink grow the soil with fat of their pampered kings. Swiftly  
 it comes, the day of the Lord's vengeance, the year that shall see His  
 wrongs redressed. Pious they shall be baneforward, the brooks of Edom,  
 in soil brimstone; a land of burning pitch, never quenched night or day,  
 its smoke going up eternally; age after age it shall yet be desolate, un-  
 travelled for ever by the foot of man. Pelican and hedge-hog shall claim  
 it, his and given to its mate; planted with the Lord's mourning-lane,  
 as an empty void, tried with his plagues, a hanging rain. Cry they for a  
 king to govern it, that has no children now, all its princes have vanished.  
 Thorns and nettles shall grow in its palace, heifers over its furnishings; it  
 shall be the lair of serpents, the pasture-ground of the crocodile. Devils and  
 monstrous forms shall haunt it, cry: call out to yeze, these the temple  
 it lies down and finds rest. Hedge-hog makes a nest to rear its young,  
 nurtured safely in powder shade; release there with release men.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The names of the beasts and monsters mentioned in verses 11-13 cannot be given with certainty. Some would understand a lion (perhaps the leopard) in place of the hedge-hog in verse 11 and in verse 13, where a different and very rare word is used in the Hebrew text, there is no clear agreement what animal, bird, or reptile is meant.



Turn back, when the time comes, to this record of divine prophecy,<sup>1</sup> and read it afresh; you shall learn, then, that none of these signs was lacking, none waited for the coming of the savior. The Lord it was sustained me with the prophecies I utter; by his Spirit that strange company was called together. For each its own dwelling-place; in his hand was the line that measured it out to them; there they shall live on for ever, to all ages undisturbed.

## CHAPTER 55

**T**HUMLIES the barren desert with rejoicing; the wilderness takes heart, and blossoms, fair as the lily. Blessings on blessings, it will rejoice and sing for joy; all the melody of Lebanon is bestowed on it, all the gear of Carmel and of Sharon. All shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Scissors, then, the shears of drooping hand and flapping knee; give word to the faint-hearted, Take courage, and have no fear; see where your Lord is bringing release for your wrongs, God himself, coming to deliver you! Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and deaf ears unstopped; the lame man, then, shall leap as the deer leap, the speechless tongue cry aloud. Springs will gush out in the wilderness, streams flow through the desert; ground that was dried up will give place to pools, barren land to wells of clear water; where the serpent had its lair once, reed and bulrush will show their green. A high road will stretch across it, by divine proclamation kept holy; none that is defiled may travel on it, and there you shall find a straight path lying before you, wayfarer it came to furnish he can go away. No lion shall molest it, no beast of prey venture on it. Free men shall walk on it, coming home again to Zion, and praising the Lord for their redeeming. Eternal happiness crowns them, joy and happiness in their grasp now, never and sighing find the way.

## CHAPTER 56

**I**T was in the fourteenth year of Tachbar's reign that Sennacherib, king of Assyria, marched on the fortified cities of Judah, and took them.<sup>2</sup> And the king of Assyria, who was then at Lachish, sent Rabshakeh at the

<sup>1</sup> Turn back, when the time comes, to this record of divine prophecy; literally, "search carefully in the book of the Lord." The verse given above is thus accurately adapted, but the rest of the passage is necessarily the Septuagint Greek text, "where the blind gather, and deaf face is free."

<sup>2</sup> The title of this chapter is to be found, with slight variations, in the fourth book of Kings (ch. vii).

head of a strong force to Jerusalem, where king Erechias was. This Babesoon took up his stand on the aqueduct that fed the upper pool, on the way that brings you to the Fuller's Field, and there he was met by Eliacin, son of Helcias, the controller of the royal household, and Sobaia, the scribe, and Jaidei, son of Asaph, the recorder. So he bade them tell Barchias, Here is a message to thee from the great king, the king of Assyria. What confidence is this that makes thee so bold? By what cunning or what force dost thou hope to meet me in arms? On whose help dost thou rely, that thou wouldest throw off my allegiance? What wilt thou rely on Egypt? That is to support thyself on a broken staff of cane, that will run into a man's hand, if he press on it, and pierce him through, such does Pharaoh, king of Egypt, prove himself to all those who rely on him. Or wilt thou answer, We trust, I and my people, in the Lord our God? Tell me, who is he? Is he not the God whose hill-thrones and altars their king, Barchias, has closed away, hidding Jude and Jerusalem worship at one altar here? Come now, if thou wert to make terms with my master, the king of Assyria, by which I must hand over to thee two thousand horses, wouldest thou be able to do thy part by putting riders on them? Why, there are no match even for a city profited, the host of my master's servants. Trust if thou wilt in Egypt, its chariots and its horsemen; but dost thou doubt that I have the Lord's warrant to come and subdue this land? It was the Lord himself who sent word to me, Make war on this land, and subdue it.

At this, Eliacin and Sobaia and Jaidei said to Babesoon, My lord, pray talk to us in Syriac; we know it well. Do not talk to us in the Hebrew language, while all these folk are standing on the walls within a hearing. What, said Babesoon, dost thou think my master hath sent me with this message for thee only, and for that master of thine? It is for the folk who man the walls, these companions of yours that have nothing left to eat or drink but the windings of their own bodies. Then Babesoon stood up and cried aloud, in Hebrew, Here is a message to you from the great king, the king of Assyria! This is the king's warning, Do not be deluded by Barchias, he is powerless to save you; do not let Erechias put you off by telling you to trust in God; that the Lord is certain to bring you tid, he cannot allow the king of Assyria to become master of your city. No, do not listen to Barchias; how art the name of king of Assyria often to you. Earn my good will by surrendering to me, and you shall live untroubled; to eat the fruit of his own vine and fig-tree, to catch the water from his own cisterns. Then, when I come back, I will transplant you into a land like your own, which will graze you neither wheat nor wine, so rich is it in cornfields and vineyards. No, do not let Erechias stir you to action by telling you that the Lord

will deliver you. What of other nations? What their countries delivered, by this god or that, when the king of Assyria threatened them? What a god had Elam and Arphad, what god had Sepharvaim? Did any power rescue Samaria from my attack? Which of all the gods in the world has delivered his country when I threatened it, that you should trust in the Lord's deliverance, when I threaten Jerusalem?

But all kept silence, and gave him no word in answer; the king had sent orders that they were not to answer him. So Eliacin, son of Hehail, the controller of the royal household, and Sobna, the scribe, and Joab, son of Asaph, the recorder, went back to Ezechias, with their garments torn about them, to let him know what Sennacherib had said.

## CHAPTER 37

NO sooner had king Ezechias heard it, than he tore his garments open, and put on sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, he sent word to the prophet Isaiah, son of Amos. Eliacin, the controller of the household, and Sobna, the scribe, and some of the older priests, went on this errand. Here is a message for thee, sayest thou, from Ezechias. Trembling shivers have come upon us; thus or rather we turned our ways, as also blaspheme God.<sup>2</sup> What remedy, when children come to the birth, and the mother has no strength to bear them? Unless indeed the Lord God should take cognizance of what Sennacherib has been saying, Sennacherib, who was sent here by his master, the king of Assyria, to blaspheme the living God. Surely the Lord thy God has listened to the supplications he uttered. Raise thy voice, then, in prayer for the poor remnant that is left.

Thus roused by the screams of Ezechias, Isaiah answered, Give your master this message. Do not be dismayed, the Lord says, at hearing the blasphemies which the courtiers of the Assyrian king have uttered against me. See if I do not put him in such a snare, or if I do not make him hear such news, as will send him back to his own country. And when he reaches his own country, I will give the word, and the sword shall make an end of him.

And now Sennacherib went back to find the king of the Assyrians before Lulais, hearing that he had raised the siege of Lachis. Now he had a son, the Tarsish, king of the Ethiopians, was on his way to do battle with him. And the king, when he heard the report, despatched messengers to Ezechias: Give this warning, he said, to Ezechias, king of

<sup>1</sup> *ms.* 1-48. See IV fig. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'shivers of dread and of blasphemy.'

- Juda. Do not let the God in whom thou puttest such confidence deceive thee with false hopes, telling thee that Jerusalem will never be stirred  
 11 to fall into the hands of the Assyrian king. What, hast thou not heard when the kings of Assyria have done to the nations everywhere, destroying them utterly? And what hope hast thou of deliverance? What saving  
 12 power had the gods of those old peoples my fathers overthrew, Gozan, and Huzan, and Rephaim, and the rest of Edom who lived in Thalamus?  
 13 Where are they, the kings of Elam, and Arphad, the kings who governed the city of Sepharvaim, and Aza, and Aza?  
 14 These dispatches were handed by the messengers to Ezechias, and when he had read them, he went up into the house of the Lord,  
 15 and held them out open in the Lord's presence. And this was the prayer which Ezechias made to the Lord: Lord of hosts, God of Israel,  
 16 who hast thy throne above the cherubim, thou alone art God over all the kingdoms of the world, heaven and earth are of thy devising.  
 17 Give ear, Lord, and listen; open thy eyes, Lord, and see; do not let Sennacherib's words go unheeded, these blasphemies he has uttered against  
 18 the living God. It is thou, Lord, that the kings of Assyria have brought a ruler on whole nations, and the lands they lived in, and thrown their  
 19 gods into the fire; but these were in truth no gods; men had made them of brass, of wood or stone, and men could break them. Now it is for  
 20 thee, O Lord our God, to rescue us from the invader, and show all the kingdoms of the world there is no other Lord save thee.  
 21 Then Isaiah, son of Amos, sent word to Ezechias, A message to thee from the Lord, the God of Israel, in answer to the prayer thou  
 22 hast made to him about Sennacherib, king of the Assyrians. This is what the Lord has to say of him: See how she mocks thee, flouts thee. See, the virgin city! Jerusalem, proud maiden, follows thee with  
 23 her eyes and waves her head in scorn. So thou wastest heat in vain, and blasphemy, and talk baselessly, and heave it out with distasteful  
 24 words, against whom? Against the Holy One of Israel. In thy rage, these warriors of thine have laughed in scorn at the Lord. It was thy dream that thou hadst scolded, with those chariots of thine, the mountain heights, the slopes of Lebanon; and now thou wouldst cut down its tall cedars, its noble fir-trees, till thou couldst reach the very summit  
 25 of the ascent, the garden in woods enclosed. Thou wouldst dig wells and drink wherever it pleased thee; thou wouldst dry up, in thy march, the brooked channels of the Nile.<sup>1</sup>  
 26 What, hast thou not heard how I dealt with this people in times past? This present design, too, is one I have formed long since, and am now carrying out; such a design as brings with it ruin for the

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'the channels of eunuchs' (etc.), but see text, and note there.

mountain-fortresses, the walled cities that fight against thee. Save or conquer, they were overthrown and dismantled, the puny garrisons that held them; still as meadow grass or mountain pasture, or the stalks that grow on the house-tops, withering before they can ripen. But as I am writing thee where thou dwellest, thy evenings and mornings, thy evening talk against me. Yes, I have listened to the ravings of thy pride as against me, and now a ring for thy nose, a twitch of the hold in thy mouth, and back thou goest by the way thou didst come.

Here is a test for thee, *Rehobai*, of the truth of my prophecy; this is year thou shalt be sown as seed, the aftergrowth, and next year wild things shall be thy food; in the third year yet very new and deep, plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them.<sup>1</sup> A remnant of *Isaiah's* year will be a seed, and this remnant will spring root deep in earth, bear fruit high in air; yet, it is from Jerusalem the remnant will come, from whence is *Shim* that we shall win salvation; so tenderly he loves us, the Lord of hosts. This, then, is what the Lord has to tell thee about the king of the Assyrians; he shall never enter this city, or shoot an arrow into it; no thick-protected host shall storm it, no warworks shall be cast up around it. He will go back the way he came, and never enter into this city, the Lord says; I will keep guard over this city and deliver it, as for my own honour and for the honour of my servant *David*.

It was after this that an angel of the Lord went out on his errand, and smote down a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp; when morning came, and men were wakened, nothing was to be seen but the campers of the dead. So *Sennacherib*, king of the Assyrians, awoke up camp, and took the road, and was gone; our did he leave Nineveh again. And one day, when he was at worship in the temple of his god *Nisroch*, two men of his, *Adramalech* and *Saraxis*, drew their swords on him, and so escaped into the land of *Ararat*; and the Assyrians passed to his son *Aschbaddon*.

## CHAPTER 38

AND now *Rehobai* fell sick, and was at death's door;<sup>2</sup> indeed, the prophet *Isaiah*, son of *Amos*, visited him with this message from the Lord, For thy affairs in order; it is death that awaits thee, not recovery. As this *Rehobai* turned his face towards the wall, and prayed to the Lord, a

<sup>1</sup> Some think that this prophecy was made three years before the events described in 37.6, *Sennacherib* having been engaged meanwhile in an attack on Egypt. But the exact bearing of the 'year' is not certain.

<sup>2</sup> *Isa.* 38.1-8. *See* 37.36 *for* 38.1-11.

- 1 there. Remember, Lord, I cannot then, a life that has kept me to thee, as  
 innocent heart; how I did ever what was thy will. And Hecuba wept  
 2 bitterly. And thereupon the word of the Lord came to Ishtar, the god  
 and tell Hecuba, Here is a message to thee from the Lord, the God of thy  
 father David. I have listened to thy prayer, and marked thy tears; be it so,  
 3 I will add fifteen years to thy life. And I will save thee and thy city from  
 4 the power of the Assyrian king; I will be his prisoner. This, says, too, the  
 5 Lord gives thee, in proof that he will make his promise good; see how  
 how the shadow has fallen, with sun-down, where the did of Achaz made  
 the hour; I will make it go ten hours back. And with that the sun returned  
 ten hours of its descent.  
 6 These are the words Hecuba king of Jude wrote, upon falling sick  
 7 and recovering of his illness. It seemed as if I must go down to the  
 gates of the world beneath, in the midnight of my youth; the moment  
 8 of life that I hoped for, hoped for in vain. No more (thought I) to  
 lift up my eyes to the Lord God in this land of the living, to see men's  
 9 faces, and quiet houses, no more.<sup>1</sup> This fleeting world! taken away  
 from me, folded up like a shepherd's tent, my life cut short like the  
 weaver's thread! And he had cut me off while the web was still in the  
 making; before the day reached its evening, he would make an end  
 10 of me. All night long I lay still, as if he had born a lion that had broken  
 all my bones; before the day reached its evening he would make an  
 11 end of me. My voice was as feeble as the voice of a nestling swallow  
 or murmuring dove; my eyes waxed out with ever remaining upwatches.  
 12 Lord, I am in hard straits; win my release for me! And yet, what words  
 can I use, what survey can I expect, when it is he himself that has  
 brought this upon me! With bitter heart I pass all my years in review.<sup>2</sup>  
 13 Lord, to frail a thing is life; on so little does my mortal breath depend!  
 14 These cannot chastise me, thou must make me free.<sup>3</sup> Water, bitter the  
 discipline that brings me peace!

And now thou hast saved the life that was in peril, throwing away

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'I shall no more see man, nor the dwelling is quiet.' The reference seems to be to the years of peace promised after the failure of Sennacherib's invasion. But come, by a slight change in the Hebrew text, would read 'the world' instead of 'quiet', which interprets the Hebrew text as meaning, 'I shall be deprived of the sight of man, as those who dwell in quiet (that is, in the grave) rest.'

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew word here used may mean 'my correspondents,' or 'my greeting,' or perhaps simply 'my life.'

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew text appears to mean, 'I will walk as if in procession all my years in the brightness of my soul.'

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'Lord, if it is thus now, live, and the breath of my life is with thee, with whom thou shalt make me free.' The Hebrew text has 'grant the recovery' instead of 'correct me.'

all my sin out of thy sight. There hast no pain in the world beneath, a death cannot become thee; those who go down into the grave have no promise of life to hope for. It is living men, as I am a living man to-day, that give thee thanks, pass on from father to son the story of thy faithfulness. Last, be my saviour still; so, all day long, the in Lord's house shall sing with the music of our praise.

Now that Isaiah bade them take a lamp of fire, and make a plaster is of it for the king's ulcer, and this is how he was healed. And now is that Ezechias had asked what sign should be given him, is proof that he would not fail in the Lord's house again.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER 39

AND now, hearing of his sickness and recovery, the king of Babylon, Merodach Baladan, sent a letter and gifts to Ezechias.<sup>2</sup> Ezechias was delighted at the coming of these envoys, and showed them his walled treasure-house,<sup>3</sup> with its silver and gold and spices and rich ornaments; the rooms where his ornaments were kept; all the wealth of his store-house. There was nothing in palace or domain but he showed it to them.

Then the prophet Isaiah gained audience of king Ezechias, and asked him, What message did these men bring, and whence had they come? They came to see me, said Ezechias, from a country that is far away, from Babylon. And when Isaiah asked what they had seen in his palace, he told him, They saw everything in my palace; I have no treasure I did not show them. And at that Isaiah said to Ezechias, I have a message for thy hearing from the Lord of hosts. Behold, a time is coming when all that is in thy house, all the treasures which thy fathers have amassed there in times past, will be taken away to Babylon; nothing shall be left of it, the Lord says. And some of thine, men of thy own line, of thy own stock, shall be carried off to be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. Why then, Ezechias said to Isaiah, welcome be the word the Lord has spoken! In my time at least, he said, may there be peace, may the promise hold good.

<sup>1</sup> We should expect verses 27 and 28 to occur between verse 4 and verse 7 above (as they do in 19 Kg. 20). It seems probable that they dropped out by mistake, and were replaced here as a footnote to the story.

<sup>2</sup> *see* 1-6. *See* IV Kg. 20, 21-22.

<sup>3</sup> *Libanika*, 'his house of perfumes,' according to the Latin version. The Hebrew text is generally understood as meaning 'his house of treasure.' The word translated 'ornaments' probably means, according to the Hebrew text, 'treasures.'

## CHAPTER 40

1 **T**AKE heart again, my people, says your God, take heart again. Speak  
 Jerusalem fair, cry aloud to her that her woes are at an end, her gain  
 2 is purchased; double tell the Lord has taken for all her sin. A cry, shout,  
 out in the wilderness, Make way for the Lord's coming; a straight road  
 3 for our God through the desert. Bridged every valley must be, every  
 mountain and hill levelled; windings out straight, and the rough paths  
 4 paved: the Lord's glory is to be revealed for all mankind to witness; it is  
 5 his own decree.<sup>1</sup> A voice comes, bidding me cry aloud; asked I in what  
 words, in these: Mustal things are but grass, the glory of them is but grass  
 6 in flower; grass that withers, a flower that fades, when the Lord's breath  
 7 blows upon it. The stolid people, what is it but grass? Grass that withers,  
 8 a flower that fades; but the word of our Lord stands for ever. Good news  
 for Zion, take thy stand, herald, on some high mountain; good news for  
 Jerusalem, proclaim it, herald, aloud; louder still, no cease now for ever;<sup>2</sup>  
 9 tell the cities of Juda, See, your God comes! See, the Lord God is coming,  
 10 revested in power, with his own strong arm for warrior; and see, they  
 come with him, they walk before him, the reward of his labours, the  
 11 achievement of his task;<sup>3</sup> his own flock! Like a shepherd he tends  
 them, gathers up the lambs and carries them in his bosom, helps the  
 ewes to milk forward on their way.  
 12 Who was it measured out the waters in his open hand, heaven  
 balanced on his palm, earth's mass poised on chain of his fingers?  
 Who tried ponder mountains in the scale, weighed out the hills?  
 13 No aid, then, had the spirit of the Lord to help him, no counsellor  
 waited by to admonish him. None other was there, to lead his skill;  
 14 no guide to point out the way, pilot to warn him of danger. What are  
 whole nations to him but a drop of water in a bucket, a scale-weight  
 15 on the scales? What are the islands but a handful of dust? His shear-  
 16 breath Lebanon itself could not find, victims could not yield enough  
 17 for his burnt-offering. All the nations of the world shrink, to him  
 18 a presence, is nothing, emptiness, a very void, beside him. And will  
 19 you find a likeness for God, set up a form to resemble him? What  
 20 wills image the metal-worker craves, for goldsmith to line with gold,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Lk. 34.<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew text, it is Zion Or Jerusalem itself that is expressed in the language of good news, according to the more probable interpretation.<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'his reward is with him, and his task (or perhaps, the wages of his task) is before him.' It seems likely that the freedom stemming from exile has here compared to the flock and herds with which Jacob returned from Mesopotamia (Gen. 32.17).



strength plan with silver? What avails ponder wood, hard of skin, is proof against decay: the craftsman's care, that his name should stand imperishable?

What ignorance is this! Has no remembrance reached you, no tradition from the beginning of time, that you should not understand earth's might? There is One aloft so high above its orb, those who live on it he sees they as locusts; One who has spread out the heavens like garments, as he were plucking a coat to dwell in. The men who can read myacles, as how he confounds them, the men who judge by earth, what empty things he makes of them! Saplings seem truly planted, as laid out, as grounded in the soil, as how they wither at his sudden blast, how the storm-wind carries them away like stubble! What likeness, then, as can you find to match me with? who the Holy One. Lift up your eyes, as and look at the heavens; who was it that made them? Who is it that marshals the full number of their starry host, calling each by its name, not one of them missing from the main? Such strength, such vigour, each spirit is his.

What, then, is this thought of thine, Jacob, what is this complaint of thine, Israel, that the Lord does not see how it goes with thee, that thy God passes over thy wrongs? What ignorance is this? Has no remembrance of it reached thee? This Lord of ours, who fashioned the remotest bounds of earth, is God eternally; he does not weaken or grow weary; he is wise beyond all our thinking. Rather, it is he as who gives the weary fresh spirit, who draws strength and vigour where strength and vigour is none. Youth itself may weaken, the warrior faint and lag, but those who trust in the Lord will renew as their strength, like eagles new-fledged; heaves, and never grow weary of harrowing, march on, and never weaken on the march.

## CHAPTER 41

**L**ET the islands come their slanders, and come to me, let the peoples of the world rise heart against; and so let them come and plead their cause; we will submit the question to an arbiter, they and I. Tell me, who was it seasoned his faithful servant<sup>1</sup> from the east, beckoned him to

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text differs here, but its sense is obvious, and perhaps correct.

<sup>2</sup> "Take heart abroad!" the same words are used for "wage their strength" in 40.32 above, and some think they have been written in here by an error, since they are not clearly suitable to the context.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, "I am weak." The Hebrew text has "waxen," and some modern

- follow? Whole nations should be at his mercy, kings be subdued at his  
 coming; flying like dust before his sword, scattered like chaff in the wind  
 at the blast of his bow. He should rout them in battle, and pass through  
 their country unopposed, leaving not a footprint behind him. Who was  
 the author, the doer of all this, but I, the Lord, who summon all the ages  
 into being? Before all, and at the end of all, I am. The islands have seen  
 it, and troubled at the sight, the remotest parts of the world have been  
 smitten with dismay; they draw near, and obey the summons.  
 And still each obeys his neighbour; Gougeon, says one to another,  
 The metal-worker, plying the hammer, encourages his fellow that  
 is smiting the anvil; all goes well, he says, with the soldering. And he  
 fashions it with nails, innumerable.  
 But thou, Israel, my servant, thou, Jacob, on whom my choice has  
 fallen, art spring from that Abraham, who was my friend: in his  
 person, I led thee by the hand from the ends of the earth, beckoning  
 thee from far away, and still I enlarged to thee. My servant thou  
 art, chosen, not rejected. Have no fear, I am with thee; do not hesitate,  
 am I not thy God? I am here to strengthen and protect thee; faithful  
 the right hand that holds thee up. Thou shalt see all thy enemies  
 disappointed and put to the wall; what are they? A very nothing,  
 those adversaries of thine; they must melt away, thou wilt look in  
 vain for the men who troubled thee, fought against thee; thy search  
 is for a very nothing, a memory of the past. It is I, the Lord thy God,  
 that hold thee by the hand and whisper to thee, Do not be afraid,  
 I am here to help thee.  
 Jacob, poor weak, poor ghost of Israel, do not be afraid; I am here,  
 says the Lord, to help thee; I am here, says the Holy One of Israel,  
 to ransom thee. I mean to go a-dreaming, and show my lodge, newly  
 made; rock like waves re-thrust the mountains and crush them down,  
 turn the hills into chaff: yea, and winnow them, till wind carries them  
 away and waves sustain them! Thou shalt yet make thy boast of the  
 Lord, triumph in the Holy One of Israel. Fear regards thee long

which would interpret: "Who summoned from the east (a certain people  
 whom Israel (that is, Norway) means that is, serveth to his battle? It is a matter  
 of much importance, who is the person so referred to. To Jensen and others  
 that it is the Assyrian but the context seems to suggest that the event lies  
 in the past, not in the future. It may perhaps be Cyrus, king of Persia, who is  
 described as God's chosen chimney in 44.28, 30: 1. But it can also be under-  
 stood of Abraham and his descendants, taken in conjunction, verse 5 referring  
 to Abraham himself and verse 3 to the Israelites. The text of verse 3 below seems  
 to favour this last interpretation.

\* Verses 5 and 3 are generally understood as referring to the making of idols,  
 but their connection with the context is so obscure that some think they have  
 been misplaced, and moved originally after verse 20 of the foregoing chapter.

for waters, where water is none, how dry their regions with thirst  
And shall I, the Lord, refuse them a hearing, I, the Holy One of Israel,  
leave them forsaken? I will open springs on the hill-slopes, wells  
in the open plain, turn the wilderness into pools, the trackless desert  
into running streams. I will plant these waters with cedar and acacia,  
myrtle and olive, rose, in that desert soil, fig and elm and box besides;  
proof for all to see and recognise, for all to mark and to consider, that  
the Lord's hand was there; who but he, the Holy One of Israel, created?

Come then, says the Lord, your pleadings! Let the King of Jacob  
hear your complaints; let them come forward, these other gods, and  
tell us the future.<sup>1</sup> So read the past for us, that the study of it may  
disclose what needs must follow; coming events make known. Foretell us  
you what is yet to be, we shall know you are gods indeed. Then, if  
you have the power, grant good or ill fortune to mankind; confer we,  
and pass judgment on it! Why, you are all empty air, a nothing that is  
nothing one effort; he counts his own shame, that makes choice of you.

I summoned one from the north country; from the east his coming  
I should be, and even he should invoke my name.<sup>2</sup> Prince he should  
harry to and fro, lightly as paper leads out his day. Which of you  
foretold this from the first? Let us recognise it. Which of you knew  
it from the beginning? We must needs say, His plan is just. But no,  
none gave tidings of it, none foretold it; there was no word come from  
you. Who will be the first<sup>3</sup> to tell him, Here, here they are? He shall  
carry my good news to Jerusalem. But when I looked, there was none  
of them that could offer counsel, or give a word in answer when I  
questioned him. None of them has right on his side; all their doings  
are nothingness; as better than empty air the images men make of them.

<sup>1</sup> The words 'these other gods' are not expressed in the original, but are  
inferred for the sake of clarity, being easily deducible from the context.

<sup>2</sup> There is the same vocabulary here about the person alluded to, as in verse 5  
above.

<sup>3</sup> In the Hebrew text, the verb is not expressed, and it is generally understood  
as meaning, 'I will be the first.' In this case, the following clause should read,  
'and I will send a messenger with good news to Jerusalem.'

## CHAPTER 43

**A**ND now, here is my servant,<sup>1</sup> to whom I grant protection, the man  
of my choice, greatly beloved. My spirit rests upon him, and he will  
proclaim right order among the Gentiles. He will not be contentious or a  
lover of fiction; none shall hear his voice in the streets. He will not tear  
the staff that is already crushed, or put out the wick that will smoulder;  
but at last he will establish right order infallibly.<sup>2</sup> Not with violence,  
nor with violence; to set up right order on earth, that is his mission. He  
has a law to give; in the far-off islands men wait for it eagerly. Thus says  
the Lord God, he who created the heavens and spread them out, crafts-  
man of the world and all the world affairs, he who gives being and breath  
to all that lives and moves on it: True to my purpose, I, the Lord, have  
summoned thee, taking thee by the hand and protecting thee, to make,  
through thee, a covenant with my own people, to shed, through thee,  
light over the Gentiles: to give sight to blinded eyes, to set the prisoner  
free from his captivity, from the dungeon where he lies in darkness. I am  
Jehoi, that is the name I bear; I will not let the boast that is mine pass to  
another, or shame my crown with grosser gods. What I told you long  
since,<sup>3</sup> has proved true under your eyes; I tell you now what it will be;  
you shall hear of it before ever it comes to light.  
Sing the Lord a new song; let his praise sound from end to end  
of the earth. Praise him from the sea, all men that sail on it, and all  
creatures the sea contains; the islands and the island-dwellers. Let  
the wilderness, now, lift up its head;<sup>4</sup> and the desert cities; the name  
of Cedar shall have villages to dwell in.<sup>5</sup> Give praise, then, rock-dwellers;

<sup>1</sup> The servant of the Lord, frequently mentioned in these last chapters of the prophecy, is beyond doubt a type of our Lord (cf. Mic. 5:2). It is not to clear whether Isaiah was speaking directly of him, or referring to the first instance to events nearer his own time. Some think the servant means primarily the people of Israel, or at any rate that portion of it which stemmed from the exile at Babylon (cf. verse 24 below). Others would identify him with some individual figure, as King Sennacherib, Zedekiah (who brought back the exiles), or Cyrus king of Persia; many other names have been suggested.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Mic. 4:4-6, where the era opened from the Exile is distinguished emphatically from the past time. 'A lover of peace' (Hebrew, 'an avenger of peace'), the Hebrew text here is different, but it is generally taken to mean 'let up his voice' (as in St Matthew).

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'the things which were first,' but the context makes the meaning clear.

<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew text probably implies 'the ruins,' as in verse 2 above.

<sup>5</sup> According to the Hebrew text, 'and there, too, who dwell in the wilderness of Cedar.'

the mountain tops shall ring with their cries. All shall give God his praise, till the seasons of his wrath reach the islands far away.

Like a giant the Lord shall go out to battle, like a warrior that rises up his own rage, with his and my, flaring his nostrils.<sup>1</sup> Too long as I have been dumb, since my heart was, hid myself in like a woman in labour? now I will have my say, I will denounce, and as I denounce, deliver! I will raise mountains and hills into a waste, withering all their verdure, make barren islands of the rivers, dry up the marshes; and as I will lead men blindfold by unfamiliar ways, guide their steps by paths unknown to them; I will make the darkness light, and the winding ways straight for them. Such was my promise to them, and were they disappointed of it? See how they are routed, how they blush and are blench, the men who trust in green images, and say to the idols they have cast, You are gods of ours!

Listen now, you that are deaf; look up, blind eyes, and see. Who is so blind as my servant, who so deaf as he, to whom my messengers were sent? Who so blind, as he that has forfeited his liberty? Who so blind, as the Lord's servant is? Eyes that have seen so much, men as they be still unseeing; ears open to every rumour, will they never hear? It was ever the Lord's will to satisfy him, to gratify, to glorify in the law he gave him; yet here is a people scolded and spoiled, taught as by warriors that have hidden it away in disguise, a prey there is none to deliver, spoil none bids them restore. Which of you will listen to this, and mark it, and give a hearing to prophecy? Who was it that made Jacob a spoil, gave Israel up into the hands of the conqueror? It was that Lord, against whom we have sinned. Because his ways lay unobserved, his love went unheeded, he poured out on Israel his angry contention, war without mercy; and he? The flames burned round him, and he could not read their lessons, scorching him, and still he could not understand.

<sup>1</sup> Some think that verses 11-12 allude to the events of the Exodus (see verses 15, 16); if so, they should probably be enclosed in inverted commas, as a quotation, as far as the words, 'such was my promise.'

<sup>2</sup> It is not certain whether the words 'like a woman in labour' should be taken with the verb which precedes, or with the verb which follows them. The second part of the sentence, according to the Hebrew text, is generally interpreted as meaning, 'I will cry out, and groan, and roar, till at last'; but the verbs used are rare, and their meaning is somewhat doubtful.

<sup>3</sup> According to the Hebrew text, 'he whom I sent as a messenger.'

## CHAPTER 43

- A**ND now, here is a message from the Lord to Jacob, his creature,  
 to the Israel he fashioned: Do not be afraid, I have brought thee for  
 myself, and given thee the same thou desirest: thou belongest to me. First  
 through water, and I will be with thee, so that the flood shall not drown  
 thee; with wind the flames, and thou shalt not be burnt, the fire shall have  
 no power to catch thee. I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel,  
 thy deliverer; I have harnessed away Egypt to win thee, Ethiopia and Sabe  
 for thy ransom. Be proud, so honoured, so dearly loved, that I am ready  
 to give up mankind in thy place, a world to save thee. Do not be afraid,  
 I am with thee; I will rescue thy soul from the east, the west shall hear  
 the calling of their master-will. I will say to the north wind, Give them  
 back; to the south wind, Restrain them no more; bring back these sons of  
 mine from far away, these daughters of mine from the world's end. Who-  
 ever owns my name<sup>1</sup> is my creature, made and fashioned for my glory.  
 Bring them out, then, into the light of day, this people of mine  
 that have eyes, and still cannot see, have ears, and cannot hear. Round  
 about us, all the nations of the world are gathered, all to witness example.  
 And now, which among you can make this claim, give us an account  
 of covenants fourfold long ago? Let them produce witnesses to justify  
 their claim, so that all may listen and say, It is the truth. I call you  
 to witness, the Lord says, you and this covenant of mine, on whom  
 my choice has fallen; will you not recognise the truth, and believe  
 me? Will you not learn to understand that I am the God you seek?<sup>2</sup>  
 None ever came into being before me, or will after me. It is I, I, the  
 Lord; no other can bring deliverance. It was I who provided that  
 deliverance, I who brought it; I told you of it, when there was no other  
 god worshipped among you; you are my witnesses to that, the Lord  
 says. I am God, and what I was, I am;<sup>3</sup> from my power there is no  
 opposing; when I execute my designs, none can avert them.  
 Thus says the Lord, your ransom, the Holy One of Israel, if  
 I send my messengers to Babylon, casting down all its towers,<sup>4</sup> casting

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'calls upon my name'; in the Hebrew text, 'is called to my name.'

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'the few things'; cf. verse 26, 27 above.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'I am he'; cf. verse 26 below p. 129.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'I am he'; cf. verse 26, but here the predominant sense is perhaps  
 'I am the same God who brought you out of Egypt'; cf. verse 26, 27.

<sup>5</sup> The word in the Hebrew text which the Latin translation "towers" is under-  
 stood by some as meaning 'ships'; it is also possible, in the Hebrew text,  
 to interpret what follows as meaning, 'I cast down the Chaldeans (into the ships)  
 which are their pride.'

down the Chaldeans, with all the pride of their armies, it is for your sakes. I, the Lord, am your Holy One, I, the maker of Israel, am your king. A message to you from that same Lord, who could once so lead you through the sea, make a passage for you through the foaming waters; could bring out chariots and horses, rank and file and chariotry together in pursuit, to fill them and never to rise again, crushed like a wick, and their light quenched. Do not remember these old things, as he says, as if you had eyes for nothing but what happened long ago; I mean to produce new wonders; even now they are coming to the a hind; surely you will understand at last? I mean to make a highway over the desert, with streams flowing beside it in the waste. The wild things will do me honour, the serpents and the scorpions, for then giving them water in the desert, streams in the waste; but it was for my people's sake that I did it, to give drink to my chosen people. I made them fit myself, surely they too will have grace to give me!

Alas, Jacob, that my name should be forgotten, alas, Israel, that a thou shouldst have troubled thyself about me so little! No ram of a sacrifice offered in burnt-offering to me, no victim of mine to do me honour; little heaves have my offerings been to thee, little trouble my mind of incense! Scented ome<sup>1</sup> thou wouldst not buy to burn is for me, nor think to cheer me with the fat of sacrifice; rather, it was I that was burdened, burdened with thy sins; I that was troubled, troubled with thy faithlessness. It was I, even I, that must be blessing or out thy offences, effacing the memory of thy sins. Then, now, thou shouldst remember my name, let us settle the matter by arbitration, thou and I; tell me what plea thou hast to bring forward. For the a-guilt of thy first father, for the rebellious of thy own spokesmen against me,<sup>2</sup> I brought thy idolatrous princes to dishonour, gave up Jacob to destruction, Israel to the scorn of his enemies.

## CHAPTER 44

**L**ISTEN, then, Jacob, my servant, Israel, the people of my choice. . . . Since it is a message to thee from the Lord that made and fashioned thee . . . in the womb, thy guardian: do not be afraid, my servant, Jacob, my true, my chosen people. I will pour out water on the thirsty plain, streams over . . .

<sup>1</sup> The scented ome was used in making holy oil for the service of the Temple, cf. Ex. 30:23.

<sup>2</sup> Since Adam was the first father of the whole human race, not merely of the Jews, the reference here is probably to one of the two patriarchs the 'spokesmen' may be Moses and Aaron (cf. Num. 16:22), or the false prophets of a later time.

the land that once was dry; I will pour out my spirit upon thy race, my  
 blessing on all thy line, and where the grass springs up they shall spring  
 up too, like willows by running water. Now, a man will say speedily, The  
 Lord's servant I; make his boast of Jacob's name; write with his own  
 hand,<sup>1</sup> Dedicated to the Lord, and lay claim to the title of Israelite. Then  
 says the Lord, Israel's King and redeemer, the Lord of hosts: I am before  
 all; there is no other God but I. What other is like me? Let me proclaim  
 it, tell us of it; let him recount the history of the past, ever since I estab-  
 lished the primal race of man; then let him make known the future that is  
 yet to come.<sup>2</sup> Do not be afraid, or bewildered; you can hear me witness  
 that from the first I proclaimed it in your hearing, there is no other God  
 but I, no other Powers to rival me.

What empty make-beliefs, what idols fashioned! What help found  
 any of them yet in his own daring inventions? Confess they, and to  
 their shame, that these have neither sight nor thought. Who was  
 it that made this god, moulded this image that nothing avails? What  
 can they do, yonder whole conspiracy, but stand there blinking? They  
 are but craftsmen with human power. See them met there in a body,  
 all struck dumb, every one shocked at his neighbour! Here is black-  
 smith that works away with his file, beats out image with furnace  
 and hammer, his strong arm the whole author of it; listen he, like other  
 men, if he be hungry, then at his task if water be hard won to drink!  
 Here is carpenter unfolding his rule; plane smoother the wood, square  
 and compass must do their work: and what has he made for god?  
 A figure fair enough, yet a man that must have need to shelter him!  
 For this cedar must fall, fir and oak be cut away from their place  
 in the forest; for this, pine-tree wasplanted where alms should nourish  
 it.

Laps yonder carpenter will cut, a human heart to find; some he  
 brings in to warm himself, kindles more when the hearth is a-burning  
 and the rest? With the rest he makes himself a god to worship, bows  
 a-down before the thing his own hands have carved! Claims breath,  
 claims even its share; the breath lowered, the full belly none grudges  
 him, nor the fire's glow that cheers him with the sight of his own  
 chimney flames. But that he should take the rest to make a god for  
 himself! That he should fall down before an image, worship it, cry  
 as out to it, Save me, thou art my god! Ignorance and folly, blinded  
 eyes that cannot see, dull hearts that cannot understand! Minds with-

<sup>1</sup> Or possibly 'on his own hand' as if branding himself with the mark of the divine service.

<sup>2</sup> The end of this verse seems confused, and it seems possible that the Hebrew gods are once more being challenged to produce proofs of successful prophecies cf. above 43.9 above.



our reason, or sense, or thought, that cannot learn their lesson! Logs that fed the flames, and then that baked for me, now that my dinner is cooked and eaten, shall I take the rest and make an idol of it, fill down before a heap of wood? Dumb and senseless are his portions; the <sup>20</sup> fool goes on worshipping, cannot free his own soul from bondage, nor ask if he shelter himself under a lie.<sup>1</sup>

Remember it, Jacob, remember it, my servant Jacob; it was I, Israel, who made thee; thou art my servant, and with thee I set my seal.<sup>2</sup> The <sup>25</sup> cloud of thy guilt, the haze of thy sinfulness, I have swept away; come back to me, thy ransomman. The Lord has been merciful; yet heavens, to sing your praise; depths of the earth, rejoice with the song of praise, mountains and fountains and every fount of living water; the Lord has ransomed Jacob, Israel shall make his heart to him. Thus says the Lord, thy <sup>30</sup> ransomman, he who fashioned thee in the womb: I am the Lord, the author of all things; alone I spread out heaven's canopy, looked for no help when I laid the floor of the earth. Mine is disappointed the mouth-<sup>35</sup> is saying of their prophecies, and bewilder the diviner's wits, and the wise men back to school, their wisdom all exposed as folly, vindicate <sup>40</sup> my own servant, and justify the counsel my own messengers have given. Is it my voice that bids Jerusalem grow populous, and the cities of Judah rise again, while I restore their ruins; my voice that bids the <sup>45</sup> deep turn into a desert, and channels to dry up all its floods; my voice <sup>50</sup> that says to Cyrus, I give thee a shepherd's part to play; it is for thee to carry out my whole purpose, and to Jerusalem it says, Thus shall he build up, and to the Temple, Thus shall he founded again.

# CHAPTER 45

A MESSAGE from the Lord to the king he has anointed, to Cyrus. I have sought him by his right hand, ready to subvert nations at his coming, put kings to flight, open every gateway before him, so that he <sup>5</sup> does not stop his feet. And now (says the Lord) I will still lead thee on <sup>10</sup> thy way, breaking the pride of nations low before thee; I will break open graves of bronze, and cleave through bars of iron; thy hidden treasures, <sup>15</sup> their secret stores I will hand over to thee. Know by this that it is I, the Lord, the God of Israel, who am calling upon thee by thy name; and that I do it for love of my servant Jacob, of Israel, my chosen people. <sup>20</sup> Yea, I have called thee by thy name; I have bound a covenant with thee,<sup>3</sup> when

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'If there is a lie at his right hand'; it was the right side that was exposed in ancient warfare.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'I compassed thee about,' i.e., in describing Cyrus as his shepherd (Gen. 28).

- 1 I show of me hath no knowledge as yet. My name is Jehovah, and there is no  
 other eternal one, no God but I; I, still unknown to thee, was fain to make  
 2 thee strong, to what end? Because I would proclaim it from east to west  
 that there is no other God. My name is Jehovah, and there is no other as  
 3 eternal one. I, the fashioner of darkness, the creator of light, I, the maker  
 of peace, the author of iniquity. I, the Lord, am the doer of all this.  
 4 (You heavens, send dew from above, you skies, pour down upon  
 on the sabbath we keep this, him, the Just One; may he, the Servant, spring  
 from the cloud womb of earth, and with him for right order take its  
 5 being.)  
 6 I, the Lord, have made my servant what he is. At his peril does  
 man, poor stuff of earthly clay, bandy words with his own Fashioner:  
 shall the clay dare ask the potter who moulds it, 'What art thou? Or tell  
 7 him he is no craftsman?' Strange, if a man should be asked by his  
 own son, why he begot him, or a woman, why she gave birth! This  
 says the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and Israel's maker, Of me you  
 must learn, what times they be that are coming: mine is the what I  
 8 will with my sons, with my own creatures. It was I formed the earth,  
 and created man to dwell in it; it was my hands that spread out the  
 9 heavens, my voice that commanded the stormy host: I, too, have now  
 named this man to perform my designs faithfully; go he where he will,  
 my guidance shall be his. He shall build up my own city, he shall let  
 my captive go free, without bribe or ransom, says the Lord of hosts.  
 10 This, too, the Lord says: all the toil of Egypt, all the merchandise  
 of Ethiopia, and all slaves from Sabaea shall come into thy power  
 and be thine; they shall walk behind thee, their hands ensnared as  
 they go, paying thee reverence, and crying out, God is with thee,  
 with thee only; there is no God where thou art not.  
 11 Truly, God of Israel, our Servant, thou art a God of hidden ways:  
 12 All the makers of false gods must needs be disappointed, must go  
 13 away ashamed and shamed. Israel has found deliverance in the Lord,  
 eternal deliverance; while ages last, no shame, no disappointment  
 14 for you. The Lord has pronounced it, the Lord who made the heavens,

1 The Hebrew text has, not 'the Just One,' but 'Vendor' (Cyrus is, God's faithful  
 servant to his people, who he required from him); not 'the Servant,' but 'servant.'  
 This verse refers to deliverance from the threat of the Babylonian empire; indeed it is not  
 in the mouths of those Jews who would not expect deliverance from the king of  
 Persia, but only from a Messiah. Some would include the first sentence of  
 verse 2 within the parenthesis.

2 "Why he begot him," "why she gave birth," it is equally possible to translate,  
 both from the Hebrew and from the Latin, "what he has begotten" and "to what  
 she has given birth."

4 It is not certain whether this promise relates to the people of Israel or to  
 king Cyrus.

and the whole frame and fashion of earth, moulded in his will. He did not create it to be idle, he shaped it to be man's home. And he says, My name is Jeshu, there is no other to rival me; it was not in a secret, not in some dark corner of earth, that my word was spoken. Now in vain I track the sons of Jacob search for me; I am the Lord, faithful to my promises, truthful in all I promise. Gather yourselves in and come near, flock together to my side, heathen men that have found deliverance; who said, in your ignorance, set up wooden images of your own fashioning, and pray to a god that cannot save. Tell us your thoughts, come, take counsel among yourselves; who was it that proclaimed this from the first, prophesied it long ago? Was it not I, the Lord? There is no God where I am not. Was it not I, the faithful God? There is no other that can save. Turn back to me, and win deliverance, ye all you that dwell in the remote corners of the earth; I am God, there is no other. By my own house I have sworn it, not shall it who is in vain, this faithful promise I have made, that every knee shall bow to before me, and every tongue swear by my name. Then shall man say of the Lord, that redress and dominion come from him; all those who rebelled against him shall appear in his presence abashed. Through to the Lord, the whole race of Israel shall be righted and brought to honour.

# CHAPTER 46

HERE is Bel fallen in pieces, Molek shattered,<sup>1</sup> their idols a going-down for wild beasts and earth! Heavy enough the burden you had to carry, these men be left to moulder in a common ruin; comfort they had none for their toiling worshippers,<sup>2</sup> living souls that have gone off into captivity. Listen to me, sons of Jacob, you whose weight has ever been my burden, like an unborn child, a babe in the womb. You grow old, but I am still the same; the grey hairs come, but I ever uphold you; I must carry you, I that created you, I must bear you away to safety. What recompense, what match will you find for me, what likeness to a reasonable man? Fools that fetch gold out of a sack, weigh silver to the balance, bid some craftsman make a god they should fall down and wor-

<sup>1</sup> The Latin version is here somewhat confused, and reads, 'Therefore is the Lord to shall my mine are clouds of justice and empire;' but the sense intended is probably that given above; the Hebrew text, also, is obscure.

<sup>2</sup> The verbs used in the Hebrew text do not bear any stronger sense than that of 'fall down,' or even 'mould down.' Some would interpret this verse as meaning that the idols of Babylon have been thrust on pusherwards, but proved too heavy to carry away.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'the man who was carrying'; in the Hebrew text, 'for the burden.'

1:14! Shoulder-high it must be borne, set down on its pedestal; there it stands, powerless to move from its place, deaf to their cry, and in their need bringing no deliverance.

• This, for your confusion, call to mind; think well on it, unbelieving hearts. Remember the lesson of times long since, that I am God, and there is no other, none to rival me; did I not tell you from the first the events of later days, from the beginning when had not yet come to fulfil My purpose, I promised, should not fail, my whole will a must needs be done. See where I have vanquished a kind of prey from the east, a man from a distant country, to do this will of mine! I, that spoke, will make my word good; I, that purposed it, my purpose will accomplish. Andrus fur off? Nay, faithless hearts, leave to me; here is witness I bring you, close at hand. Distance there is none to be travelled, nor longer deliverance on the way. Deferred God's promises shall be, Jerusalem have sight of my glory.

## CHAPTER 47

COME down, sit in the dust, poor maid of Babylon; the ground thy seat shall be; no throne any longer for that queen of the Chaldean folk we know once, so lovely, so delicate. Out then to the milkmaids and gird them, ready to expose thy nakedness; off with thy veil, here are weapons to be crossed bare of leg. Thou shalt be exposed to shame, thy naked form uncovered; I mean to take vengeance on thee, and no man shall stay my hand.

• (But we have one to ransom us, who but the Lord of hosts, the Holy One of Israel?)

• Sit dumb, bury thyself in darkness, lady of Chaldean; thou shalt rule the nations no longer. Angry with my people, turned enemy against the land of my choice, I gave them less thy power; and thou, what mercy didst thou show them? Heavy the yoke thou didst lay on aged shoulders. Thou wouldest surely be a queen for ever; thou didst sit light-heartedly, not recking what she and should be. And now, here is a word for those delicate ears, lady of the cushion seat, who stress there sitting thyself, I see Babylon, I have no rival; no lady wisdomed, no children but for me. These two things shall fall on thee suddenly in a single day, childlessness and wisdomed; fall upon

<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to see either what is the relevance of this verse in its present context, or how it could have stayed here that context from elsewhere. As it stands, it appears to be a prophetic refrain sung by the hostiles, interrupting God's message to the Babylonians.

there is full measure, so blind and all thy sorceries, through the mass folly of thy wizards so blind.

Such was the crew in those wicked days of thine, then hasten to find us of disaster, thy very wisdom, thy very knowledge were a curse; I am Babylon, thy heart told thee, rival I have come. And now comes a ruin unforeseen, others deem no miracle can arise, sudden and strange thy succours wither now. What else shall All that multitude of wizards, and with them not persevere with thy enchantments, the hard-earned loss of thy youth? Mayhap it will turn to thy advantage thou shalt be formidable yet! But no, thou art worried of those many come to subvert thee. Let them come to thy side now and save thee if they can, diviners that gaze up at the stars, never deem of the month, to tell thy future for thee! Like stubble burn they see and all their own lives they cannot rescue from the flame. There is no healer to warn them, no ingem-scold to sit by! And this is the end of all thy long study; wasted is generation of thy youth, all have gone away in their reckoning; deliverance for thee is none.

## CHAPTER 48

A MESSAGE for you, sons of Jacob, heirs of Isaac's name, sprung from the stock of Isak, that take oath in the Lord's name, of Isaac's God the necessary preserve, but not in faith, but not in loyalty! Twelvemong they are still redeemed of a holy city; still on Isaac's God, the Lord of Isak, has they for support. What happened to them past, I had foretold long before; warning was raised, and in the public way, then, evidently, I would set to work, and the prophecy was fulfilled. I know well what an outward measure thou art, with reasoners as an iron hammer, forehead harricaine as harricaine; I would warn thee from the first, tell thee what was coming before it came; never shouldst thou say this was the work of thy false gods, the will of idols thou didst serve and trust. Consider closely the things I warned thee of, was there any forestalling them? Ever I reveal to thee, long before, things kept secret from thy knowledge, events that are coming about now, unknown of them.<sup>2</sup> What they are yet beyond knowledge, I reveal things not thine to hear, it was no news to thee. And still thou wouldst not listen, thou wouldst be ignorant with whom I prophesied to thee in times past, I could get no hearing; what hope from the maker but of treason? I know thee a rebel from thy birth. If I

<sup>2</sup> The exact point of verses 4 and 5 is debated; both the Hebrew text and the Latin version, which differs from it considerably, give "that" instead of "now" as the time when the things kept secret were revealed.

- republican than from my vengeance, it is my own honour demands it; such then I must, for my own sake, or wouldst thou rush to thy doom.
- 8 I have tested thee, but art as silver is tested; even in the furnace of affliction, thou wast already my choice. However, my own honour demands it; how should I suffer my name to be mocked, or the worship that belongs to me given to another?
- 9 Listen then, Jacob; listen to me, those loved to whom my call was sent. I am still the same; before all, and at the end of all, I am. My hand fashioned the heavens, my fingers measured the span of earth; it is my ordained truth that in their place. Assemble, all you nations, and listen to me; tell me which of your gods has prophesied it.<sup>1</sup> The Lord, in his great love for Israel,<sup>2</sup> means to subdue Babylon to his will, to bend his arm among the Chaldeans.<sup>3</sup> But I did, I scorned it; it was I that brought the conqueror on his way, so that it lay smooth before him.
- 10 Canst thou sound me and listen; from the first I have been telling you this openly enough; was I not there among you long since, before it happened? And now that it is happening, it is the Lord God, it is the spirit of the Lord God, that sends me to you.<sup>4</sup> There is a message from the Lord, thy messenger, the Holy One of Israel: I am the Lord thy God, ever ready to teach thee what it concerns thee to know, guide thee on the path thou treadest. If thou hadst but heeded my warnings! Then had a flowing stream of peace been with thee, a full tide of the Lord's favour; thy own race, thy own stock, should have been numerous as the sand on the pebbles on the sea-beach; the remembrance of thee as should never have been cut off from my merciful regard.<sup>5</sup> Away from Babylon, have done with Chaldaea, let this be your triumphant watch-word; make it heard everywhere, publish it to the ends of the earth, tell them the Lord has redeemed his servant Jacob; they did not go astray when he led them through the desert, he could bring water out of the rock for them, cleave the hard rock and make the water flow. But for the rebellious, the Lord says, there is no peace.

<sup>1</sup> Or perhaps, "assemble, all you heathen, and listen to me, tell me which of the heathen gods." The context makes it clear that our verse or the other is dictated by the original text, which gives simply, "assemble, all of you, and listen to me, tell me which of them."

<sup>2</sup> In the original, simply "him."

<sup>3</sup> It is presumably the prophet who speaks here in his own person.

<sup>4</sup> In the Latin version, these sentences express regret for the past; in the Hebrew text, they might express a hope for the future.

# CHAPTER 49

**L**ISTEN, remote islands pay heed to me, nations from far away. How I came I was born, the Lord sent me his summons, kept me in mind already, when I lay in my mother's womb.<sup>1</sup> Word of mine is sword of his, keenly sharpened, under cover of his hand; arrow he has chosen and carefully, hidden yet in his quiver. There are my arrows, he whispers, there are the fared I claim for my own.<sup>2</sup> To me, all my labour seemed useless, my strength worn out in vain, his to judge me, he, my God, must reward my work as he would. But now a new message he sends me; I am his servant, appointed ever since I lay in the womb, to bring Jacob back to him. What if Israel will not answer the summons? None the less, the Lord declares me to be answer; none the less, he, my God, protects me. For thus I will, he promises, not with thy service be content, when the tribes of Jacob that have summoned, brought back the poor remnant of Israel; nay, I have appointed thee to be the light of the Gentiles, in thee I will send out my salvation to the furthest corners of the earth.

A message from the Lord, Israel's rescuer, Israel's Holy One, is the despised one, is the nation that is abhorred,<sup>3</sup> is the slave of tyrants: Kings, when they see this, shall rise up from their thrones, princes too, and fall down to worship, in honour of the Lord, that keeps his promise so faithfully, the Holy One of Israel, that claims thee still.

Thus says the Lord, There is a time of pardon, when prayer of thine shall be answered, a day of salvation, when I will bring thee aid. I have kept thee in readiness, to make, by thy means, a covenant with my people;<sup>4</sup> Thine to serve a ruined country, to pass out the fabled lands meet, men that are bound in darkness removing to freedom and to the light. There shall be pasture for my flock by the wayside, feeding-grounds they shall have on all the barren uplands; they will

<sup>1</sup> It is not certain whether the speaker here is the prophet himself, or the servant of the Lord referred to in 42.1 and elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps in the sense that this one man is all the Israel left, at a time of general apostasy. The sentence may also be rendered, 'Thus, Israel, not my servant', but verse 6 below seems to indicate that the person addressed is a messenger sent to Israel, not the people itself.

<sup>3</sup> In the Hebrew text, the probable meaning is 'to him that is abhorred by the nations.' This would mean that the promise is made to the servant of the Lord (or perhaps to the prophet), not to the Jewish nation. Whichever explanation be given, it is not easy to be sure of the connection of this verse either with what precedes it or with what follows it.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 55.1-2.

hunger and thirst no more, nobody lost nor run compasses they;  
 this is a merciful shepherd, that will lead them to willing fountains  
 11 and give them drink. And I will cure all these mountains of mine  
 into a highroad for you, and through the uplands my path shall lead.  
 12 See how they come from far away! Exiles from north and west, exiles  
 13 from the south country return. Ring out, heavens, with praise; let earth  
 keep holiday, and its mountains also that praise again; the Lord brings  
 consolation to his people, and they play on their need.

14 Did I see complete, the Lord has forsaken me, my own Master  
 15 gives me never a thought? What, can a woman forget her child that  
 is still suckled, play no longer the son she bore in her womb? Let  
 16 her forget; I will not be forgetful of thee. Why, I have cut thy image  
 on the palms of my hands; these walls of thine dwell before my eyes  
 17 continually. Here are craftsmen ready to build thee again; vanished  
 18 now, the spoilers that plundered thee. Look about thee, and see thy  
 children met together, coming back to thee; As I am living God, the  
 Lord says, all these shall be a robe to deck thee, shall ring thee round  
 19 like a bride's jewels; the silent houses, the lonely places of a ruined  
 countryside, shall have no more, now, for thy many inhabitants, when  
 20 all that spoiled thee of thy lands have fled far away. Sons born to  
 thee in the days of thy bitterness shall cry out, Here all is comforted.  
 21 Give me sons to live! Who has begotten me these? these will ask.

Seven days of exile, when I could not give birth; who has nursed  
 me these, when I was left solitary? Where were these all the while?  
 22 Even now, says thy Lord God, I will hearken to the nations, lift up a  
 signal for all the world to see; son and daughter of thine shall be nursed  
 23 in their arms, carried on their shoulders. Thou shalt have kings to  
 honour thee, queens to nurse thee for thee; kings and queens shall  
 bow to earth before thee, kissing the dust thy feet have trodden. And  
 thou shalt know at last what a Lord I am, a Lord none ever treated  
 in vain.

24 Shall the strong be robbed of his spoil? Who shall deliver the captive  
 25 from a warrior's hand? Captives of the strong, the Lord says, shall  
 be taken away from him, the valiant warrior shall lose his spoil. I will  
 pass judgement on the men who have been thy judges, and thy own  
 26 children shall exult. I will find thy enemies on their own dole,  
 give them their own blood to make them drunk, and all mankind shall  
 know that I, the Lord, have delivered you, that I, the Prince of Israel  
 have brought thee return.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mt. 23.37.



## CHAPTER 30

THUS says the Lord, Who can show you of separation your mother had from me when I sent her away? Was I in debt, that I must needs tell you as slaves? Nay, if I told you, it was for your disobedience; it was wrong with I thrust you out of doors. And now wait I come to you, and find none to greet me,<sup>1</sup> call you, and hear no answer to my call? What, has arm of mine grown slack and shrivelled, lost its power to save? Have I strength no longer to set men free? Nay, with a word I can yet turn sea into desert, dry up rivers, fill the fish lie rotting on the banks, dead of thirst; never I can put the heavens with darkness, and give them mourning words to wail.

Over the Lord rebuke my tongue to utterance that shall rebuke the weary; smite my dull ears, morning after morning, that Master's bidding is heard. An attentive ear the Lord has given me; should I witness him? Should I shrink from the task? I offered my body defenceless to the man who would smite me, my cheeks to all who plucked at my beard; I did not turn away my face when they reviled me and spit upon me. The Lord God is my helper; and that help cannot play me false; meet them I will, and with a face unmoved as flint, not mine to suffer the shame of defeat; here is One steady by us to set right done me. Come, who pluck? Meet me, and try the issue; let him come forward who will, and accuse me. Here is the Lord God ready to aid me; who dare pass sentence on me now? Shrink is away, their malice, like garment the words has worn.

Who is here that fears the Lord, listens to his servant's message? or Who would make his way through dark places, with no glimmer of light? Let him wait in the name of the Lord, and lean upon his God. For you others, with bread at glad, that your own fire would make, with his your own hands have kindled light the path if you may; this is all the gift I have for you, a bed of anguish.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'I had none to greet me'; literally, 'There was not a man.'

<sup>2</sup> The meaning of this verse is very obscure, and is variously explained. The context is perhaps best suited if we understand it of such Jews as were playing rebellion against the governing power, instead of seeking consistently for God's help, the verse referred to in the previous verse.

## CHAPTER 51

**L**ISTEN to me, then, you who follow the true path, you that have recourse to the Lord. Think of the rock you were quarried from, of the hidden depths whence you came, of Abraham that begs you, of Sara that was your mother; he was a childless man when I called him, and I blessed him, and granted him a posterity. And has the Lord no play for Sion, left desolate, no play as he raised start? Doth not he will turn that wilderness into a garden of delights, that loneliness into a paradise; in her, too, mirth and gladders shall be found, there shall be dancing-joy and songs of praise. People of mine, race of a chosen race, give heed and hearken! Henceforth, my law shall be promulgated, my decrees be notified, for a whole world's enlightening. Sion, now, my faithful servant will come, even now he is on his way to deliver you; these arms of mine shall execute judgment on the nations; the ocean islands are waiting for me, are looking for my aid. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, cast them down to earth again; these heavens shall vanish like smoke, the earth be footed away like a garment, and all who dwell on it share the same destination; my saving power is eternal, my faithfulness unchangeable. Listen to me, you that can discern the right, my own people, with my law written in your hearts; not ye are to be afraid of men's threats, shrink from them when they revile you; crumble away they must, like garments the worms have eaten, like wood felled by the moth; my saving power is eternal, my faithfulness lives on from age to age.

Up, up, arms of the Lord, array thyself in strength; up, as in the days that are past, long ago thou. What other power was it that smote our iniquities, smote the dragon; what other power didst up the sea, with its deep rolling waters, make the son's career a highway, for a rescued people to tread? Now, now, when the Lord his rescuer will come home again to Sion, joining him as they go, Eternal happiness crown thee, joy and happiness in their grasp now, sorrow and sighing fled for ever.

It is I, still it is I, that will bring thee consolation. And it is thou that art afraid of mortal man, of earth-born things that die like grass? Is it thou that dost forget the Lord, thy maker, who spread out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth? What, go in thy all day long of ponder angry tyrant, sworn to smite thee? What of the tyrant's anger

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'the proud son,' but the word used in the Hebrew text is probably a proper name, Nebuch. This is used as a title for Egypt, as in Ps. 88.11 and 'the dragon' is an usual name for the Egyptian power, as perhaps in Ps. 73.14.

now! Come ye<sup>1</sup> with hurried step to release his prisoners, persecuted to the death till now, or suffered to starve for want of bread! I am ye the Lord thy God, the same power that stirr'd up the sea till waves rise high on it: the Lord of hosts is the name I bear. To thy lips I have entrusted my message, kept thee under cover of my hand, to replace heaven and rebuild earth, to call Zion, These are my people.<sup>2</sup>

Up, up, Jerusalem, break thyself! It was a draught of his vengeance as the Lord gave thee to drink; ay, thou hast drunk deep of a cup that maddens the senses, drained it to the dregs. So many children she has a borne and reared, and none to give her support, none to take her by the hand! Who is to comfort for thee, the sport of a double mockery, as by war and was dismantled and vanquished? Who is here to succour thee? They are left to lie at every street corner, these sons of Sion, as dazed as wild bull caught in a net, brought down by the Lord's anger, by the punishment he, thy God, has sent them. Listen then, the unfabricated, thy wit bewitched with sorrow, not with wine, here is the message thy master has for thee, thy Lord and God, ready to fight in his people's cause! I am taking it away from thy hand, this draught that maddens the senses, the dregs of the vengeance I had poured out for them: thou shalt drink it no longer. Cruel oppressors that huddle thee lie down and let them walk over thee, dost under their fist, a pathway for them to tread, shall find the cup has passed from thy hand to theirs.

## CHAPTER 52

UP, up, arise thyself, Zion, in all thy strength, don thy strength as before thy new glory, Jerusalem, city of the Holy One! The uncircumcised, the wicked, shall enter thee no more. Shake the dust from thee, Jerusalem, rise up and take thy drums; rid thy neck of the chains that bound it, Zion, once captive queen! This is the Lord's promise, You were<sup>3</sup> hurried away for nothing, and you shall be rescued without cost.<sup>4</sup> Time was, the Lord God says, long ago, when my people went down into Egypt and dwelt among strangers there; time was, since then, they were

<sup>1</sup> Or possibly 'That is coming!'

<sup>2</sup> From this verse it appears that the dialogue, verses 9-16, is either between the Lord and his people, or between the Lord and his Servant, cf. 49.5.

<sup>3</sup> The sense is probably, 'I gained nothing in return when I sent you (see note at 46.12)'. Cf. 50.1 above, Ps. 41.12. I did not escape the gratitude of the Chaldeans, who remind Moab; I am free therefore, to remind your enemies of this whenever I will! The interpretation, 'You were sent into exile for no fault of your own, and you shall be restored for no merits of your own' is another probable in itself and suited to the context.

- 1 oppressed, beyond all reason, by the Assyrians: what needs it, the Lord  
 says, that of now, my people should be carried off thus wantonly into  
 exile? Their new miseries are suddenly, bring my name recklessly into  
 2 reproach. The day comes when my own people my own name will revere-  
 nce, nor doubt that I, who promised to be with them, am with them now.  
 3 Welcome, welcome on the immediate heights the messenger that  
 says, All is well! Good news brings he, deliverance cries he, calling  
 4 Son, Thy God has claimed his throne! A shout goes up from the  
 widowers: they are crying out all at once, all at once echoing their  
 praise; their own eyes shall witness it, when the Lord brings Zion  
 5 deliverance. Rejoice, echo all at once with shrieking, raised huzzas  
 of Jerusalem; comfort from the Lord for the Lord's people, Jerusalem.  
 6 comforted! The Lord hases his holy arm for all the nations to see in  
 7 to the remotest corners of earth he, our God, makes known his saving  
 8 power. Refuse, return; no more of Babylon's sorow nothing doled  
 as you come out from the heart of her, keep yourselves unswayed,  
 9 you that have the vessels of the Lord's worship in your charge. No  
 need for confusion at the time of your going, this shall be no hasty  
 flight, with the Lord himself to march before you, the God of Israel  
 to stir you.  
 10 See, here is my servant, one who will be prudent in all his dealings.  
 11 To what height he shall be raised, how exalted, how exalted! The  
 world stands quaking in horror; was ever a human form so misshapen,  
 12 human bearing ever so defiled? Yet this is he that will purify a multitude  
 of nations; kings shall stand dumb in his presence; yea, now, where  
 men had no tidings of him, made known to such as never heard his  
 name.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "What needs it, then or now?" Literally, "And now, what is to us here?"—  
 though this is less accurate in a rendering of the Hebrew text. The idiomatic  
 sense which this phrase commonly has left out of account, and many other passages  
 would be "And what business have I to interfere here?" that this is evidently  
 inappropriate, and it is best to take the words literally, as in Gen. 19.12. Cf.  
 note on verse 3.

<sup>2</sup> "Forsake"; literally "sprinkle", but wherever this word occurs elsewhere, the  
 thing, not the person, is its object (i.e., you sprinkle something on a person),  
 and various versions have been made to avoid the Hebrew text, e.g., "smoke."  
 The rest of this verse, in the Hebrew text, will equally well yield the sense, "They  
 shall see that of which they had no tidings, that which they had never heard  
 shall be made known to them." But the other sense, which is given by the Latin  
 version, is clearly assumed by St Paul in Rom. 15.21.

## CHAPTER 53

WHAT evidence for such news as ours? Whom teaches it, this new revelation of the Lord's strength? He will watch this coming of his appear among us, unregarded as<sup>1</sup> befrowned sheet, as a plant in waterless soil; no moisture here, no majesty, no beauty, as we gaze upon him, so with our hearts. Nay, here is one displaced, left out of all human reckoning; bereft with misery, and no stranger to weakness; how should we recognize that sheet? How should we take any account of him, a man as displaced? Our weakness, and it was he who carried the weight of it, our miseries, and it was he who bore them.<sup>2</sup> A sign, so witherage of him, a sign God had endured and brought low; and all the while it was for our sins he was wounded, it was guilt of ours crushed him down; on him the punishment fell that brought us peace, by his bruises we were healed. Stripped clean of all of us, each following his own path; and God laid on his shoulders our guilt, the guilt of us all.

A victim? Yet he himself bowed to the stocks? no word comes from him. Sleep led away to the slaughter-house, lamb that stands dumb while it is slung; no word from him. Impulsed, brought to judgment, and carried off, he, whose birth is beyond our knowing; numbered among the living no more! His case it is for my people's guilt I have written him.<sup>3</sup> Taken he have of the rich, the guileful, to win but a grave, to win but the gift of death<sup>4</sup> he, that wrong did never, nor had

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Rom. 10. 15.

<sup>2</sup> 'Unregarded as', in the original, simply 'like,' but this sense appears most probable, in view of what follows. The natural plot of the verse may also be interpreted as meaning, 'there is no moisture, no majesty here to catch our eyes, no beauty to win our hearts.'

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'his face was as it were hidden.' In the Hebrew text, it is not clear whether the face of the servant is hidden from the collector, or taken *on display* from him.

<sup>4</sup> Mt. 5. 12.

<sup>5</sup> Literally, according to the Latin version, 'He has been offered up because he himself willed it.' The meaning of the Hebrew text seems to be rather, 'he has been cruelly treated, and all the while he stood himself.'

<sup>6</sup> The beginning of this verse in the Hebrew text runs hardly, 'He was taken away from the vision and from judgment, and his generation—who will realize?' The meaning usually given to the passage does almost every word in a strange sense, and it seems probable that there has been a corruption in the text of the Septuagint Greek version, quoted in *Ac. 8. 33*.

<sup>7</sup> The Hebrew text here gives a more simple translation, 'His blood gave him burial with the wicked, and with the rich (dead) in his death'; but the meaning of this phrase is difficult to determine. The Latin can only be interpreted (on the basis of verse 5 above) as meaning that the servant continued all fellowship with the wicked and the rich in order to win himself a sinner's grave.

- a witness on his lips! Ay, the Lord's will it was, overwhelmed he should  
 be with trouble, his life laid down for guilt's atoning, he shall yet  
 be rewarded; that of a long posterity, instrument of the divine purpose;  
 11 for all his heart's anguish, rewarded in full. The Just One, my servant,  
 many shall be slain for his own, win their acquittal, on his shoulders  
 12 bearing their guilt. So many lives reasoned, lives so violent troubled  
 of their spell. Such is his due, that gave himself up to death, and would  
 be crowned among the wrongdoers: here those many slain, and made  
 intercession for the guilty.

## CHAPTER 34

- SING with praise, barren city that art childless still; who thy praise,  
 1 cry aloud, with that want never brought to bay; forsaken, she is to have  
 many children now, the Lord says, that with whose husband remains with  
 2 her.<sup>1</sup> Make noise round for thy son, stretch wide—what hinders thee?—  
 the curtains of thy dwelling-place; long be the ropes, and fling the pegs  
 3 that loose them. Right and left they shall spread, till they run dis-  
 4 compass the heathen, people the ruined cities. Nor shall be that dis-  
 appointment, nor shall be blush for hopes unfulfilled; longer, hereafter,  
 the shame of younger days, the reproach of thy widowed state; think upon  
 5 it no more. Husband now thou hast, and the name of him is the Lord of  
 hosts, thy creator; he, the Holy One of Israel, that will now be called God  
 6 of the whole earth, makes thee his own. The Lord calls thee back, a  
 woman forsaken and forlorn, the wife of his youth, long cast away; thy  
 7 God sends thee word. If I abandoned thee, it was but for a little moment,  
 8 and now, in my great compassion, I bring thee home again. Had I my  
 face from thee, it was for a short while, till my anger should be spent; love  
 9 that takes pity on thee shall be eternal, says the Lord, thy saviour. The  
 days of Zion have come again; I return to Zion that I would bring on  
 many floods on the curb such as this; yea, but my oath for it,  
 10 I will be angry with thee no more, rebuke thee no more. Let the moun-  
 tains be moved, the hills shake; my compassion towards thee stands  
 unrevoked, my promise will revelation, says the Lord, thy comforter.  
 11 Then, the friendless, the scorn-hated, the insolent, shall have  
 a parliament of pardoned sinners, and thy foundations shall be of sapphires  
 12 thou shalt have fountains of hope, and gates of carved gems, and all  
 13 thy boundary stones shall be jewels. All thy children, then, shall  
 be disciples of the Lord; thy children, blessed how abundantly with  
 14 peace! Justice shall be thy sure foundation; the firm thy thought

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 49:25.

be all oppression, now they have nothing to fear, all result of the mind;<sup>1</sup> when peril is none to threaten them. Alas! that had no part in this, who shall come to thy side; strangers shall throw in their lot with thine.<sup>2</sup> See where the wind blows the coal in his finger, fashioning a new weapon according to its use! Who but I made him? And who but I made the dagger that goes out to destroy? No weapon that is forged against thee shall go true; no voice that is raised to condemn thee, but thou shalt give it the lie. Such their lot shall be that are the Lord's servants; such protection shall they have of me, says the Lord.

## CHAPTER 55

**S**o many soldiers who will not come to the water! So many districts, who will come and get him food, get wine and milk free, no price to be paid? What, always spending, and no bread to eat, always sailing, and never a full belly? Do but listen, here you shall find answers; here our children shall refresh your hearts. To my servants give bread and hearing, to your spirits shall revive; a fresh covenant awaits you, this time eternal; gracious promise of mine to David shall be fulfilled now.<sup>3</sup>

Before all the world my witness shall, a prince and a ruler among the nations.<sup>4</sup> Successes of mine shall go out to a nation that never knew me; peoples that never heard of me shall hasten to thy call; such the glory thy God, the Holy One of Israel, has borrowed on thee.<sup>5</sup>

To the Lord beside you, while he may yet be found; cry out, while his life is close at hand to leave. Leave rebel his ill-doing, sinners his guile; droughts, and come back to the Lord, sinner of his mercy, our God, so rich in pardon. For mine, the Lord says, so think as you think, a deed as you do; by the full height of heaven above earth, my dealings are higher than your doings, my thoughts than your thoughts. Once

<sup>1</sup> 'Thought of the mind'; the word in the Hebrew text means either 'demon' or 'ruler'; neither seems a very good parallel for the word 'oppression,' and some have suspected corruption in the text.

<sup>2</sup> The Latin version, probably through misunderstanding a word that is three times repeated, differs widely here from the Hebrew text, whose meaning seems to be 'Let mine streets open themselves as they will, it is with no taxation or mine, whoever enters against that shall fall because of thee (or perhaps, shall be compelled to fall in with thee).'

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Ps. 88.35-38; Is. 71-74.

<sup>4</sup> This is evidently assumed to refer to David, but the description is not very suitable, and it is not possible that the prophet, with one of his soldiers dependent, has gone back to the Lord's service here.

<sup>5</sup> The phrase mentioned in verse 2 is more probably the subject of this address, than the people of Israel.

10 *fall* from the sky, *their* rain or snow return to *it* May, it collecteth  
 earth, making *it* into it and making it fruitful, to provide the sower with  
 11 fresh seed, the hungry mouth with bread. So it is with the word  
 by those lips of mine once uttered; it will not come back, as empty  
 echo, the way it went; all my will it carries out, speeds up its trend.  
 12 Doubt not, then, your shall be a happy departure, a peaceful return;  
 doubt not mountains and hill shall await you with their protect, and  
 13 the woods robe their splendour. Tall pine-trees then shall grow where  
 valurian grow, and cedars spring from ponder woods-beds; your  
 glory the Lord shall win, such a blessing as eternity cannot efface.

## CHAPTER 36

**K**EEP right order, the Lord says, faithful to your duty still we long  
 I will send deliverance, my own faithfulness shall be revealed.  
 1 Blamed, every man that so lives, every mother's son that by this side  
 holds fast, keeps the sabbath holy, and his own hands clear of mischief.  
 2 Preserver let him be, of alien birth, will the Lord sleep his slumber-  
 sleep? Launch let him be, is he so better than a barren womb, cut down  
 3 as worthless? May, for yonder cometh the Lord has this message:  
 Who keeps my sabbath? Who makes my will his choice, true to my  
 4 covenant? A place he shall have in this house, within these walls of  
 mine a memorial; two or daughter his name shall be perpetual;  
 such a memorial I will grant him as time shall never efface.  
 5 And so it shall be with the alien born, will they but choose to their  
 be with the Lord's worshippers, that cherish the love of his name;  
 the Lord's servants that keep the sabbath inviolate, and are true to  
 6 his covenant. Free of the covenant that is my sanctuary, welcome  
 guests in the house where men pray to me, not vainly so my altar they  
 shall bring burnt-offering and sacrifice. Gloried my house shall be,  
 7 for a house of prayer, by all the nations.<sup>1</sup> Such promise the Lord  
 God makes, that now brings home the called sons of Israel: I have  
 others to bring, that must yet rally to thy side.  
 8 Come, all you wild things, all you beasts of the forest, your prey  
 9 devour you! These are none but blind watchmen, all unaware how  
 are dumb dogs that cannot bark, like swine that lie sleeping, like hogs  
 10 with their dream; senseless dogs that cannot tell when they are  
 goaded with food. The very shepherds have forgotten their swill  
 see them go their ways, each busy, first and last, with gorging his own

<sup>1</sup> Mal. 1:11.



appetite: Forth we mine, and drink ourselves drunk! To-morrow is shall be is to-day was, and to-morrow, however yet?

## CHAPTER 53

**A**LAS, that name takes meaning! See how good men die, how the friends of God are lorned away from around none has the wit to see trouble is coming, and the good must be spared the sight of it.<sup>1</sup> Peace is to be his lot, only let him rest, that followed over the straight path.

But you, come and answer for yourselves, bereft of the conscience, children of the adulterer and the harlot! Over whom would you make merry, with open mouth and laughing tongue? What are you but the sons of shame, a bastard race? You, that dally with idols under the first spreading tree, that sacrifice little children in the rock-caves among the pines?

Where the valleys part,<sup>2</sup> there is thy part and lot; to those thou wilt pour out libations, wilt offer sacrifice, and must I look on unmoved? Thus hast thou done thy best on the peak of a high mountain; there thou hast gone up to offer victims. Respite of mine must be put behind the door, where the goats should hide in, now thou wouldst strip thee naked and let in a pillar in my place, make free with my marriage-bed! With such as these thou didst exchange woe, greedily thou didst buy their good will. A king's favour to win,<sup>3</sup> with silences thou wouldst cover thee, wouldst spare no kind of perfume; as for caused thy surveys went out, and even thy pride was humbled, low as hell itself. So wearied with long journeying, and never didst thou cry, Enough; still obstinate, restless thy need thou wouldst not. Alas, what anxious fears were these, that no my service made thee false, of not no memory left thee, no thought? And all because I nothing said,

<sup>1</sup> The denunciations in verses 2-22 would be suitable to Babylon on the eve of its capture by the Persians (Chap. 46) but they are usually regarded as continuous with the succeeding chapter, which seems to be addressed to unworthy rulers of God's own people.

<sup>2</sup> There is no agreement among scholars, what is the situation here alluded to. Some think the prophesies are made against the half-breeds common of Israel which occupied Samaria when the Jews returned from exile; others would identify the 'good man' of verses 1 and 2 as king Sennacherib, and apply what follows to the history of Manasse.

<sup>3</sup> Some would interpret the Hebrew text as meaning 'in the smooth stones of the valleys,' which leads them back to the play upon words.

<sup>4</sup> The king is identified by some with the god Molech (whose name means 'king') by others with the king of Assyria. From the context, some reference to foreign alliances seems probable.

- made as if I nothing saw, till at last thou hadst forgotten me! Yet,  
wouldst thou regain thy strength, from me, no when, thou must have  
news of my thy own striving is all in vain. Let them deliver thee, if  
they can, at thy summons, thou new allies thou hast made! See how  
they are carried away on the wind, how a breath will scatter them!  
His the prize, that in me has confidence; on my holy mountain he  
shall find a resting-place. Hark, how the cry goes up, A road, drive,  
a road; let them have free passage! There are my people, close of every  
kindness to their path!
- A message from the high God, the great God, whose habitation  
is evening, whose name is hallowed! He, dwelling in that high and  
holy place, dwells also among chartered and humbled souls, bidding  
the humble spirit, the chartered soul, rise and live! I will not be always  
claiming my due, I will not cherish my anger eternally; what soul has  
taken its origin from me? Am I not the father of all that breathe?
- Grudge wrongdoer that defies me I must needs make down, hide  
my face from him in anger, let him follow the path his own evil  
will has chosen. Now to ply his plights, now to bring him remedy!  
Home-coming at last, consolation at last, for him and all that honour  
him! The harvest of men's sinners, it is I that bring it to the birth.<sup>1</sup>  
Peace, the Lord says, peace to those who are far away, and to those  
who are near at hand; I have brought him remedy. But rebellious  
breeds are like the tempestuous sea that can never find repose; its waves  
must ever be churning up mire and scum. For the rebellious, the  
Lord says, there is no peace.

## CHAPTER 52

- CURT aloud, never ceasing, raise thy voice like a trumpet-call, and tell  
my people of their transgressions, call the sons of Jacob to account.  
Day after day they besetge me, arraign my dealings with them, I confess,  
you would think, ever doubtful, one that never swerved from the divine  
will. Proof they ask of my faithfulness, would falsify a plea against  
their God.<sup>2</sup> Why hast thou no eyes for it, say they, when we fasted; why

<sup>1</sup> The latter part of this verse, in the Hebrew text, is usually interpreted, 'For the (human) spirit would thus sweep (and) the breathing soul which I have made'; but this conflicting with the parallelism we should expect in Hebrew poetry. The Latin reads literally, 'a spirit shall go out from my face, and I will give freedom'; the interpretation offered above is that of St Jerome and other Fathers.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'I have crossed the fruit of the lip'; cf. Hab. 13.17.

<sup>3</sup> 'Bring a plea against,' literally, 'oppose,' but the context shows that the verb is used in a legal sense, as in 55.1 above and elsewhere.

didst thou pass by unheeding, when we humbled ourselves before thee?

Fasting, when you follow your own whim, distract upon all your desires! Might comes of it but lawless and quivering; angry blows profess it. A better fast you must keep than of old, ere peace of yours makes itself heard above. With such fasting, with a day's penance, should I be content? Is it enough that a man should bow down to earth, make his bed on sackcloth and ashes? Think you, by such a fasting day, to win the Lord's favour? Nay, fast of mine is something other. The false claim learns to forge, ease the insupportable burden, set free the over-driven; away with every yoke that galls! Share thy bread with the hungry, give the poor and the stranger a welcome to thy house; meet thou the naked, clothe him; from thy own flesh and blood turn not away. Then, sudden as the dawn, the welcome light shall break on thee, in a moment thy health shall find a new spring; divine favour shall lead thee on thy journey, brightness of the Lord's presence close thy ranks behind. Then the Lord will listen to thee when thou callest as king thy cry, and he will answer, I am here at thy side.

Banish from thy midst oppression, and the finger pointed scornfully, and the plotting of harm, spend thyself giving food to the hungry, in relieving the afflicted; then shall light spring up for thee in the darkness, and thy dark shall be as noonday; the Lord will give thee rest continually, it fill thy soul with comfort, thy body with rest.<sup>1</sup> Not more secure the well-watered garden, the spring whose waters never fail. Refresh, in thy land, the immortal soul; renewed, the foundations of long ago; this thy task shall be, to repair the broken walls, to reclaim the by-ways. Walk surely, keep thy sabbath unprofaned. Here is a day I have sanctified, not for thy self-pleasing; a precious thing the Lord has made holy and honourable; and with thou dishonour it? With thee go thy own way, use it for thy own pleasure, while it away is gone! Then shalt yet have joy in the Lord; I will carry thee soft, high above the high places of the land, satisfy thy longing for Jacob's patrimony; the Lord's lips have promised it.

<sup>1</sup> The sense of the Hebrew text is, 'guide thee.'

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'he will fill thy soul with brightness and deliver the bones.' But the Hebrew text means rather, 'he will satisfy thy desire in times of drought, and refresh thy bones,' though the authority for this last verb is uncertain.

## CHAPTER 59

**D**OUBT you the Lord's hand can reach far as ever, or being delivered—  
 and! Think you his ear has grown deaf, that you cry out in vain?  
 Nay, sin of yours has come between you and your God; guilt of yours has  
 estranged him that he denies you salvation; the bloodstained hands, the  
 itching fingers, lying lips, and tongues that whisper of treachery. Who  
 cross the chain of justice, who judge themselves? A lie their confidence,  
 folly their weakness, they carry *iniquities*<sup>1</sup> in the words, being dumb to  
 blink. Eggs the cockatrice may hatch, yet there is death in the tape of  
 them, a brood of basilisks; softly the spider weaves, yet web-of-lies will  
 never make cloth, none will be the warmer for her toil; so it is with those;  
 all unprofitable their schemes, their doing all naughting. Swift ministers  
 of evil, hot-foot they coast down the blood of innocence,<sup>2</sup> their aim ever  
 to destroy, leave a trail of havoc and ruin. Where peace should be found  
 they know not, nor ever set their hearts on right; still away by crooked  
 paths where safety is none.

What wonder if redress is still far from us, if reprove finger on its  
 way? Curse us light, and nothing see but darkness, baffle us the dawn,  
 and walk in dark. Blind men that grope along a wall, hands, not eyes,  
 to show the way, stumble we at noonday as though brought; we  
 are dead men in a world of shadows. No better than growling beast,  
 or drives that moan and moan, will we hope for the redress that never  
 comes, the deliverance that is far away. Our guilt arrests us before  
 thee, our sin accuses us; shame ever at our side, we confess the wrong  
 is done. Behold our treason against the Lord, that turn away from  
 his divine leading to plan cruelty and rebellion; false thoughts we  
 conceive in our hearts that still find utterance. Redress is withheld from  
 us, because loyalty has neglected in our streets, and honest deeds  
 are estranged; sin that loyalty should be forgotten, innocence marked  
 down for spoil.

All this the Lord has seen, and shame he thought in there should  
 be no redress. Was there no champion to come forward? None found  
 he, and his heart misgave him. And as his own arm must bring the  
 deliverance he intended, his own faithfulness hold him to it.<sup>3</sup> That  
 faithfulness is the breastplate that arms him, that saving power the

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 7-12.

<sup>2</sup> The second part of this verse reads literally, 'His own sin delivered him, and his own justice strengthened him.' The notion is that of Almighty God bestowing his power to help men because they cannot help themselves, cf. 43,5 below (where, however, "iniquitation" takes the place of "justice").

believe that guards his head; requiem the garment he wears, justice  
lose the mantle that wraps him round.<sup>1</sup> Doubt not he will repay, or  
wreak his anger upon the rebels, give his enemies their due; no island  
is far off but it shall have its punishment, all the means of the Lord's  
salvation turn into waters lurch, and the just stand in awe of his  
face. Here is a river running upon them is still dried, driven on by  
the Lord's wrath; here is one that brings deliverance to Sion, and so  
to all Jacob's children that turn away from their sin; the Lord has  
promised it. This covenant I will make with them, the Lord says: a  
spirit of mine that dwells in them, words of mine stationed on thy lips,  
on thy lips shall I dwell, on the lips of thy children and thy children's  
children, brotherhood and for ever.

## CHAPTER 60

**R**ISE up, Jerusalem, and shine forth; thy dawn has come, breaks the  
glory of the Lord upon thee! What though darkness covered the  
earth, though all the nations lie in gloom? Upon thee the Lord shall dawn,  
over thee his splendour shall be revealed. Those rays of thine shall light  
the Gentiles on their path; kings shall walk in the splendour of thy re-  
surrection. Lift up thy eyes and look about thee; who are these that come flock-  
ing to thee? Sons of thine, daughters of thine, come from far away, or  
rising up close at hand.<sup>2</sup> Heart of thee shall overflow with wonder and  
gratitude, to see all the riches of ocean, all the treasure of the Gentiles  
pouring into thee! A stream of vessels overflowing about thee, merchandise  
from Median and Saba, bringing all the mass of Saba<sup>3</sup> with their gifts of  
gold and incense, their cry of praise to the Lord! Here thou all the hosts  
of Cedar shall be driven, the sons of Nebeloth shall be thy victims; gifts  
at my altar accepted, to make the flame of my temple more famous yet.  
Who are these that come, swift as the cloud-wreck, as doves flying home  
to the dove-cot? These, too, are thy sons; long since, the islands and the  
ocean-going ships have awaited my signal, when I would bring them  
home from far away, their silver and their gold with them, for the house

<sup>1</sup> Eph. 4. 18. 19. I Thim. 2. 8.

<sup>2</sup> The second part of this verse reads literally, 'The sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall arise from the side'; it seems clear due to Jerome's error, and 'arise' for 'arise' agreeing polemically with the Hebrew text, which has 'and thy daughters shall be raised at the side.' For this reason a visit paid, and it is hard to see why father daughters should come from the picture; it is possible that there was a corruption in the text.

<sup>3</sup> 'All the mass of Saba' in the Hebrew text, 'All of them (i.e., the silver and the vessels) from Saba.'

of the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, that has bestowed this glory on thee.

Strangers shall build up thy walls for thee, kings shall do thee service; great as my severity in chastising thee shall be my favour when I pardon thee. Thy gates shall stand open continually, no need to shut them day or night;<sup>1</sup> easier way for the wealth of the nations that shall flow into thee, for the kings with their retinue. Every nation and kingdom that refuses thee homage shall perish away, whole peoples empty and forsaken. All the beauty of Lebanon shall be brought to thee, fir-wood and box-wood and pine-wood mingled together to adorn the place, my sanctuary; I will have honour paid to thee, the resting-place of my feet. See how they came branding her before thee, the race of thy former oppressors, how she says that once despised she worships the ground thou hast trodden, calling thee The City of the Lord, Zion, dear to the Holy One of Israel! Thine, the desolate, thou, the unbelieved, a place neglected by men, shalt be the pride of ages, the joy of unceasing generations; thou shalt have nations to serve thee, kings to foster thee, and acknowledge at last that I, the Lord, am thy deliverer, the Lord that calls in Jacob has paid thy ransom.

I will exchange thy brass for gold, thy stone for silver, thy wood for brass, thy stone for iron; I will give thee peace itself to be thy government, justice itself to be thy magistracy; there shall be no more talk of wrong in that land of thine, no tidings of wreck and ruin within those borders; all thy walls shall be deliverance, and all thy gates towers. No lamps will thou have the sun to shine by day, or the moon's beam to enlighten thee; the Lord shall be thy everdawning light, the God shall be all thy splendour.<sup>2</sup> No more, for thee, the setting of sun, the waning of moons, now that the Lord is thy everdawning light, and the days of thy widowhood are over. Thy people, all guileless now, shall inherit the land eternally, the flower I planned, the pride of my widowhood. The number of them shall be reckoned to a thousand, the least regarded, to a great nation; swift and stubborn shall be the doing of it, when once the hour is come.

## CHAPTER 61

THE Lord has anointed me, on me his spirit has fallen; he has sent me to bring good news to men that are humbled, to bind broken hearts,  
promising the release of captives, the opening of prison doors, proclaiming the year of the Lord's pardon, the day when he, our God, will give us

<sup>1</sup> Apoc. 21.25.    <sup>2</sup> Apoc. 21, 23; 22.3.

refuge. Comfort for every mourner; Sion's mourners, what decree  
 should I make for them, what gift offer them? Sion shall be gathered,  
 that made waste stream with ashes; bright with oil, the faces that were  
 marred with grief; gaily they shall be clad, that went sorrowing. Surely  
 growth (none will say) that still hope reposed in them;<sup>1</sup> praise of the  
 Lord's planting! Theirs to rebuild what long has lain desolate, repair the  
 ruins of past days, resume the forsaken cities that were lost, we thought,  
 for ever.

Strangers they shall be that send your flock for you, Sion and Sion's  
 yam also hands shall lift, for you, a higher name, a greater calling,  
 priests and chosen ministers of the Lord our God. All the wealth of the  
 nations shall be yours to enjoy, their spoils shall be your booty; for  
 double portion of shame and contempt, you shall be twice honoured  
 now. Twice happy that home-coming, eternal that comes! I am  
 the Lord, that love to give each his due, reward the wrong, whom none  
 rob me of my sacrifice. Faithfully I will give them their recompense,  
 paid myself, now, by an eternal covenant. Each a son shall spring  
 from them, as all the nations of the world shall acknowledge; none  
 that were them but shall know them for a people the Lord has blessed.

Well may I rejoice in the Lord, well may this heart triumph in my  
 God. The delivrance he seeks is like a garment that wraps me about,  
 his mercy like a cloak enfolding me; as bridegroom to friend of garland  
 that crowns him, as bride of the nuptials she wears. See how ponder  
 earth gives promise of spring, how the garden seeds give promise  
 of flower! And the Lord God will make good his promise for all the  
 world to see; a spring-time of delivrance and renewal.

## CHAPTER 62

FOR love of Sion I will no more be silent, for love of Jerusalem I will  
 never rest, until he, the Just One, is revealed to her like the dawn,  
 until he, her deliverer, shines out like a flame. All the nations, all the  
 kings of the nations, shall see him, the Just, the glorious,<sup>2</sup> and a new

<sup>1</sup> 'Surely growth that still hope reposed in them'; or possibly, 'that talk  
 of protecting men.' It is not easy to be certain whether the word 'growth' is  
 the original meaning, here, but it seems so on the part of man or his children on the  
 part of God.

<sup>2</sup> The interpretation of this verse is obvious, whether in the Hebrew text or  
 in the Latin.

<sup>3</sup> Instead of 'Just One,' 'the just' and 'the glorious,' the Hebrew text has  
 'justified' i.e., released, exonerated, 'deliverance' and 'glory.'

- 1 name shall be given thee by the Lord's own lips. The Lord upholds thee,  
 2 his crown, his pride; thy God upholds thee, his royal chadon. No longer  
 shall men call thee *Foreigner*, or thy land *Desolate*; thou shalt be called  
 My Beloved, and thy land a Home, now the Lord takes delight in thee,  
 3 now thy land is populous once again.<sup>1</sup> Gladly as a man takes home the  
 maiden of his choice, thy sons shall come home to thee; gladly the Lord  
 shall greet thee, as bridegroom his bride.  
 4 I have set watchmen, Jerusalem, upon thy walls, that shall never  
 cease crying aloud, day or night: you that keep the Lord in remem-  
 brance,<sup>2</sup> take no rest, nor let him rest neither, till he has restored  
 5 Jerusalem, spread her fane over all the earth. The Lord has sworn  
 by his own right hand, by that arm which makes known his power.  
 Never again shall thy enemies see the harvest of thy corn-fields, thou  
 6 shalt drink the wine thou hast tilled to win; herewe and waggons,  
 here in my precincts, shall sit and drink together, praising the Lord.  
 7 Out, out through the city gate! Give my people free passage; a  
 road, there, a smooth road, away with the boulders on it! Raise a signal  
 8 for all the nations to see. To the farthest corners of the earth the Lord  
 proclaims it, a message to govern Sins: Luck, where thy deliverer  
 comes, look, how they come with him, the reward of his labour, the  
 9 achievement of his task!<sup>3</sup> A holy people they shall be called, of the  
 Lord's numbering, and thou the city of his choice, no more forsaken.

## CHAPTER 49

WHO is this, coming from Edom, coming on the road from Babel,  
 with garments deep dyed? Who is this, so gaily clad, marching so  
 valiantly?

I am one who is faithful to his promise, a champion bringing deliver-  
 ance.<sup>1</sup>

- 2 And why are thy garments stained with red? Why dost thou go clad  
 like the men who tread out the wine-press?  
 3 Near whom has credited the wine-press but I only; not of all the  
 nations, no champion came to stand at my side. I have been treading  
 them down in my anger, trampling on them, full of vengeance, their  
 blood that has been sprinkled on the clothes about me; I came in

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, the land is to be called not 'a Home,' but 'a Wife,' and it is to be 'repopulated,' not 'populous,' once again.

<sup>2</sup> Keep the Lord in remembrance: that is, according to the Latin version, remember him according to the Hebrew text, remind him (of his promises).

<sup>3</sup> See note on 40.10 above.

<sup>4</sup> The singular here is probably the Lord himself (cf. 55.08).



garments deep-dyed. My heart told me the time had come for vengeance, & this was my destined roar of ransoming. Looked I all around, there was none to help me; vainly I called for aid. My own arm should bring the deliverance I intended; my own indignation uphold me.<sup>1</sup> I have attempted the people down in my anger, restrained them<sup>2</sup> with my fury, brought down their strength to the dust.

Lament, while I tell again the story of the Lord's murder, what wrongs the Lord has won; all the Lord has done for us, all the wealth of blessings his pardoning love, his abounding pity has lavished on the race of Israel. They are my own people, he would say; my own children cannot be false to me; and with that, he delivered them. In all their sinning, power of his was not weakened;<sup>3</sup> his angel, token of his presence, brought them deliverance. In love and pity he redeemed them, lifted them in his arms and raised them up, all through the days gone by. Only when they rebelled against him, when they distressed the spirit of his chosen servant,<sup>4</sup> he would turn their wrong, and fight against them. And even yet he would bethink him of those past, of Moses and the people that were his.

Where is he now, the God that led them through the sea, his flock with his own appointed shepherds; gave his holy spirit to the man of his choice?<sup>5</sup> Infinite power, that led Moses by the hand; that parted to the sea at their coming, to win his name renown. Through its waters they passed, safe of their foothold as those that is led through the desert; carefully as drives on some treacherous hill-side, the Lord's spirit guided his people. Thus didst thou bring them home, and win thyself honour. Bethink thee now, in heaven; look down from the palace where thou dwellest, holy and glorious. Where, now, is thy jealous love, where thy warrior's strength? Where is thy yearning of heart, thy compassion? For me, compassion is none.

Yet, who is our father, Lord, if not thou? Let Abraham choose a

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 59.18, *man*.

<sup>2</sup> 'Reined them'; literally, 'made them drunk.' Some Hebrew MSS read 'make them in pieces.'

<sup>3</sup> There is a double, *hazak*, in the Hebrew text, whether we should read 'he was not effaced (weakened)' or 'he was affirmed.'

<sup>4</sup> 'The spirit of his chosen servant'; literally, 'of his holy man,' which may refer to Moses in verse 15, to other national leaders (such as Joshua and Aaron) in this verse. But the Hebrew text has 'the spirit of his beloved,' which in Hebrew idiom is nearly equivalent to 'his holy spirit'; and this is the translation given by the Syriac version (cf. *ibid.* 59.20).

<sup>5</sup> The second half of this verse is usually joined to the first, as if it were the thought in the mind of the person there mentioned. But, if so, we must understand 'himself' as the subject of 'bethought himself,' which is a very strange suggestion.

us, Israel drinks his own blood, we see the axe still; is it not thy heart of oak, thou hast paid a price for us? And now, Lord, wouldst thou drive us away from following thee, hasten our hearts till worship we have none to give thee? For love of thy own servants, release, for love of the land that by right is thine. Is it nothing to thee, enemies of thy holy people should have the mastery, trample thy sanctuary down? Pined we were in old days, before ever we called thee King, ever met thy holy name for our watchword?

## CHAPTER 54

**W**OULDST thou but part human enemies, and save down, the hills striking from thy presence, smother away as if burnt by fire the waters, too, boiling with this flood? So should the flame of thee go abroad among thy enemies; a world should quake at thy presence! Of thy marvellous doing, we ourselves cannot bear the sight; as it was when thou camest down, and the hills shrunk away before thee, long ago.<sup>1</sup> Such things as were never known from the beginning, as our senses heard, eye never saw, were at thy command, thou, O God, hast made ready for all that wait thy aid. Gradually thou goest out to meet them, loyal lovers of thine that keep thee ever in mind, ever follow thy bidding.<sup>2</sup>

And now thou art angry with us, we have sinned; so it has been a long while, and shall we find deliverance? We are now defiled, what are all our claims on thy mercy? No better than the dust a woman casts away; we are like fallen leaves, every one of us, by the wind of our own transgressions whisked along. There is none left that calls on thy name, that boasts himself to lay hold of thee. Thou hidest thy face from us, broken were rough in the grip of their wrong-doing.

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text can be translated as so to make this verse part of the wish extended in verse 1 and 2: 'Oh that thou wouldst do marvellous things such as we do not expect, while the hills shake away before thee.' But the verb does not mean 'expect'; it means 'hope for.' The use of the perfect tense, 'thou shalt come down,' in the Latin is difficult to account for, unless we suppose it to be a reference to Isaiah 40 (Is. 40.35, 36), suggested by the historical reminiscences of the foregoing chapter.

<sup>2</sup> The meaning of verse 4 and 5 is obscure. The Hebrew text of verse 4 is usually taken to mean, 'My sin has ever been on board of a God, unless thou dost, that art on behalf of those who wait for him steadily, for thee.' But the construction is awkward, and the passage was early taken in the sense which the Latin gives it; cf. 1 Cor. 10. 22. It seems likely there has been some corruption in the text. The end of verse 5 is very strange if we translate it as a statement, 'And we shall be delivered.'

Yet, Lord, thou art our father; we are but clay, and thou the craftsman,<sup>1</sup>  
 who hast fashioned us, with thine anger, Lord, with thy anger, with  
 thou keep our sins ever in mind? We are thy people, all of us. A dream, is  
 the city thy chosen servant knew, a dream, the Sion we love; Jerusalem  
 has fallen. Given over to the flames, the house that was our sanctuary;<sup>2</sup>  
 and our guide, the house in which our fathers praised thee; all that  
 we loved has in ruins! Lord, with thou have patience still? With thou  
 keep silent still, and overthrow us with calamity?<sup>3</sup>

## CHAPTER 65

SO ready I to answer, and ask they will not; so easy to be found, and  
 search for me is none! A people that will not call on my name; who my  
 own voice should whisper, I am here, I am close at hand.<sup>4</sup> Overwhelmed  
 these bands of mine, all the day long, to a nation of rebels, saying this  
 way and that as the mood takes them, openly defying me. Stricken hidden  
 away in gardens, shores of brack. See how they lodge in tombs, pass the  
 night in the precincts of strange gods;<sup>5</sup> eat swine's flesh, and wear them-  
 selves hoarse of forbidden things! And all the while so complacent! Teach  
 of mine would defile me! What marvel, if my indignation considers you?  
 Nay, fire it is that burns recklessly. See where the doomsman stands witness  
 in my presence. This shall not be passed over; I will take vengeance, yet  
 is not unto their lips. Six of years, the Lord says, six of your fathers, that  
 sacrificed on mountain-tops, worshipped on the hill-tops in defiance of  
 me; for all these I must repay due measure, poured out into the lap; that  
 is my first task.

Then says the Lord: If one would grapes be found in a cluster, the  
 cry is, Do not destroy it, there is a blessing in it. And I, for the sake  
 of my true servants, will not destroy root and branch. I will leave a  
 few to seed to breed them, others enough in Jude for their coun-  
 selors of wine, the men of my choice shall have their portion, my servants  
 shall dwell there. Flocks there shall be, folded on the Plain,<sup>6</sup> and a  
 cattle resting in the valley of Achor; of my people none shall be disem-  
 powered that had recourse to me. But you that flouted the Lord, left  
 his mountain sanctuary forgotten, spread a table for the Powers of

<sup>1</sup> This verse may be interpreted in either of two ways: (i) that the Lord offers mercy to the Gentiles, although they have not asked for it, or (ii) that he offers mercy to the Jews, and yet they do not accept it. The latter seems to be probably truest in the author's mind. St Paul gives the opposite side of the picture (Rom. 10.1-5).

<sup>2</sup> It was one of the heathen methods of divination to sleep in some specially holy place and expect inspiration to be given by dreams.

<sup>3</sup> The Plain, that is, Samaria.

11 Forasmuch, and poured out wine as it, because that awaits you is the  
 reward, you shall know down to death. My call unanswered, my voice  
 12 unheard, you did ever what I forbade, chose ever what I hated. This,  
 then, is the sentence the Lord God pronouncing; you shall be hungry,  
 while my servants have food, you shall be thirsty, while my servants  
 13 drink, you shall be disappointed, while my servants are glad. My  
 servants shall be light-hearted and sing, while you, with sad hearts,  
 14 cry aloud, groan in the bitterness of your spirit. A name you shall  
 leave behind you to serve my chosen people in a name; the Lord God  
 takes full toll. For his own servants he will have a new name instead;  
 15 By the God of truth shall be the blessing men invoke. By the God of  
 truth shall be the oath men take, in this land of mine [hereforward].<sup>1</sup>  
 Forgotten, the sorrows of past days, hidden away from my eyes.

16 See where I create new heavens and a new earth; all things shall  
 17 be remembered no longer, have no place in men's thoughts. Joy of  
 years, pride of years, this new creation shall be; joy of mine, pride  
 18 of mine, Jerusalem and they folk, opened anew. I will rejoice in Jeru-  
 salem, take pride in my people, and the sound of weeping and lament  
 19 shall be heard among them no more. None shall die there unmourned  
 from life; never an old man but lives out his full time; young he dies  
 that dies a hundred years old; so brief a span, it shall be the course pre-  
 20 scribed as a dinner.<sup>2</sup> Live they now to occupy the houses they build,  
 21 to enjoy the fruit of the vines they planted, that once built houses for  
 others to occupy, planted what others should enjoy; my people shall  
 live to the age of trees and see the work of their own hands wear out  
 22 before them. Not in vain they shall toil, these, my chosen, nor begot  
 children to see them overwhelmed by calamity; their name the Lord  
 23 names, their children shall be spared to them. Answer shall come ere cry  
 24 for help is uttered, prayer find audience while it is yet on their lips. Wolf  
 and lamb shall feed together, lion and ox eat straw side by side, and the  
 serpent be content with dust for its food; all over this mountain, my sanc-  
 25 tuary, there shall be no hurt done, the Lord says, no life shall be forfeit.

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'poured out wine as Dintley.'

<sup>2</sup> The name of Israel will be used as a curse, cf. the formula in Jer. xiii. (these things the people which follow, literally 'And the Lord shall say they,' are meant as an abbreviation for some such formula as 'May the Lord say that as he does Israel'). The faithful remnant will be given a different name instead of Israel, and God himself will no longer be invoked under the familiar name, 'the God of Jacob,' but as 'the God of Israel' instead. The name, with its painful associations, must be forgotten.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'There shall not be there (in the Hebrew text, from there) an unweaned child of days (or years), or an old man who does not fill up his year of life; for a young man of a hundred years shall die, and a dinner of a hundred years shall be served.'

## CHAPTER 66

THUS says the Lord, Heaven is my throne, earth the footstool under my feet. What house will you build for me, what place can be my resting-place? Nothing you are about you but I dedicated it, the Lord says; my hand gave it being. From whom, then, shall I accept an offering? Patient he must be and beautiful, one who stands in dread of my warnings. To the rest it is all one; slaughter they are on, or murder a human victim,<sup>1</sup> cut sheep's throats, or dash out a dog's brains, make offering of meal, or of swine's blood, in my honour burn incense, or bless the name of a false god. In all this, it is but caprice guides their choice, in all manner of abominations; trust me, at my own caprice I will choose the terror I bring down upon them.<sup>2</sup> My call unanswered, my voice unheard, they did ever what I forbade, chose ever what I hated.

Learn to the word of the Lord, you that hold it in contempt! Failed their hopes shall be, that hate and scorn you because my name you bear; that say, Come, let us see the Lord send himself in judgment, let us witness this triumph of yours! Mark, a site of waste in the city, a site in the temple! It is the site the Lord makes, as he brings destruction on his enemies!

Without travail, the mother has given birth; before her time a mother of sons. Never till now was such a tale heard, such a sight witnessed; should a nation's pangs come upon it in a day, a whole people be born at once! Such are the pangs of Zion, such is the birth of her children. What, says the Lord thy God, shall I, that bring children to the birth, want power to bring them forth? Shall I, that give life to the weak, want strength to open it? Lovers of Jerusalem, rejoice with her, be glad as for her sake, make holiday with her, you that returned for her till now. Ye shall you be her foster-children, suckled pleasantly with her consolation, delighting in, to your hearts' content, the abundant glory that is hers. Thus says the Lord, Peace shall flow through her like a river, as the wealth of the nations shall pour into her like a stream in flood; this shall be the milk you drink, the children carried at the breast, nestled on a mother's lap. I will assuage you there, like a mother to caress her son, and all your consolation shall be in Jerusalem; you

<sup>1</sup> Isa. 7:24.<sup>2</sup> "From whom shall I accept an offering?" literally, "to whom shall I have regard?" cf. Gen. 4:4.<sup>3</sup> Literally, "to who sleep as we (I and he) be who question a man," *Isa.*<sup>4</sup> "At my own caprice I will choose the terror!" literally, "I will choose the worst calamities and the terror."

eyes flared with it, your hearts consent, vigorous as the Oak grass  
your whole frame.

- Thus to his servants the Lord makes known his power; his enemies  
11 shall have no quarter given them. See, where the Lord comes with  
fire about him, with storms that drive like the storm, empty his thresh-  
12 sies, his vengeance like a smothering flame! Fire and sword shall be  
13 the world's purging, till the Lord has taken full toll. Vainly they sought  
helpless, that would purify themselves in secret gardens, behind shut  
doors, and all the while ate flesh of wine and fidd-monies and other  
meats abominable; now and there shall be for all of them, the Lord  
says.<sup>1</sup>

- 14 Thus, too, I will hold armies upon all such deeds and devices of  
thine; ay, upon all nations and more. All men come and see my glory  
15 revealed, and I will set a mark upon each of them. What of those  
that find deliverance? I have an arm for them, to be my messengers  
among the sea; to Africa, and to Lydia where men drew the line, to  
Italy, and to Greece, and to the Islands far away.<sup>2</sup> They shall go on  
where men never heard of my name, never saw my glory yet, to reveal  
16 that glory among the nations. And out of all nations they shall bring  
your brethren back, an offering to the Lord, with horns and chariot,  
with flour and wine and waggon, to Jerusalem, the Lord says, to this  
mountain, my sanctuary. A bloodless offering this, for the men of  
17 Israel to bring, in its sanctified vessel, to the Lord's house! And some  
among these newcomers, the Lord says, I will choose out to be priests  
and Levites.

- 18 This, too, he promises: Including your race and name shall be in the  
new heavens, the new earth I desire, to stand continually in my  
19 presence. Month after month, sabbath after sabbath shall go by, and  
still all mankind shall come to bow down before me, the Lord says.  
20 And ever as they leave the gates, eternal remains they shall see of the  
men that rebelled against me long since, a peep now, to worms undying,  
no fire unquenchable<sup>3</sup> none that ever it has shall turn with longing  
from the sight.

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text of verses 17 and 18, which differs from the Latin version, is probably corrupt, and has called forth a variety of interpretations.

<sup>2</sup> This geographical identification found in the Latin text are by no means certain.

<sup>3</sup> *Abh. 9-10-11.*

## THE PROPHECY OF JEREMIAS

### CHAPTER I

THESE are the words of Jeremiah, son of Hilkiah, one of the priests who dwelt at Anathoth, in the land of Benjamin. The word of the Lord came to him during the reign of Josiah, son of Amon, over Judah, in the thirteenth year of it; came to him during the reign of Josiah's son, Jehoiachin, and did not cease till the men of Jerusalem were taken captive, when Jehoiachin, that was also son to Josiah, had been reigning eleven years and five months.

The word of the Lord came to me, and his message was: I discerned that for my own before ever I fashioned there in thy mother's womb; before even thou camest to the birth, I set thee apart for myself, I have a prophet's crown for thee among the nations. Alas, alas, Land of God (said I), I am but a child that has never learned to speak. A child, sayest thou? the Lord answered. Nay, I have a mission for thee to undertake, a message to deliver to thee. Have no human fears; for I am at thy side, to protect thee from harm; the Lord says. And with that, the Lord put out his hand, and touched me on the mouth; then, he told me, I have inspired thy lips with utterance. Now and now as I give thee authority over the nations; with a word thou shalt root them up and pull them down, overthrow and lay them in ruins; with a word thou shalt build them up and plant them anew.

Then the Lord's word came to me, Tell me, Jeremiah, what is this thou seest? A branch of a tree, I told him, with the eyes already open.<sup>1</sup> Well seen, he answered; and I too have my eyes open, watching for the opportunity to carry out the threes I wrote. And again it came, Tell me, what is this thou seest? A smoking caldron, said I, that is coming from the north. And it is from the north, the Lord told me, that a calamity is brewing for all thy fellow countrymen. All the fellow the northern kings rule I mean to smother, the Lord says; hither they will march, and each will set up his statue where gods of Jerusalem stand, as enclosing wall, as fortified city of Judah. And there I will plant my cross against the men of Judah, charging them with their rebellion in forsaking me; in offering libations to gods not theirs, and worshipping idols of their own making.

Up, then, glad thou like a man, and speak out all the message I give

<sup>1</sup> 'Ezer', that is, help. In the Hebrew text, there is a play upon the similarity of the word 'to watch' and the word 'anointed one', which is derived from it.

that. Mark them undaunted, and they shall have no power to daunt  
 3 thee. Strong I mean to make thee this day a fortified city, a pillar  
 of iron, a wall of brass, to resist king, prince, priest and common  
 4 folk all the country through. Impossible then shall be to dash thee;  
 and I am at thy side, the Lord says, to deliver thee!

## CHAPTER 2

1 **T**HEN the Lord's word came to me: Go and cry out so that all  
 Jerusalem may hear, with this message from the Lord of hosts:  
 "What memories I have of thee, gracious memories of thy youth, of  
 the love that played rock between us, when I led thee through the  
 2 desert, alone in the barren wastes, thou and I! Israel was set apart for  
 the Lord, first-fruits vowed to be his revenue; he lay under a lion that  
 plucked them, and smelt out his malice, the Lord says.

3 Listen, then, to the Lord's word, men of Judah hence, every clan  
 4 that bears the name of Israel, to the Lord's message: What faith did  
 they find in me, those fictions of yours, that they should keep their  
 distance from me, and swear false gods, false as themselves? And  
 never a thought to ask where I, the Lord, was, that rescued them  
 from Egypt, and led them on their way through the desert, wild and  
 rocky, parched and dead, far from haunt of traveller and the homes  
 5 of man! Into a garden I brought you, to enjoy the fruits and the blessings  
 of it; and you had no sooner entered it than you must needs defile it,  
 6 my own land, turn my choice house into a place abominable. Never  
 a point to ask where I, the Lord, was; never a vow of love but made  
 a snare for me, never a ruler but played me false, never a prophet  
 but took Israel for his oracle, and had recourse to powers that were  
 7 impotent. Against you, the Lord says, my appeal will lie, and with  
 your children I will yet be at issue.

8 Tell the men till you reach the hills of Coshim; send envoys out  
 to the wilds of Coshim, look for yourselves and make earnest enquiry,  
 9 to know if the like was ever heard! What nation ever changed its gods,  
 though gods indeed they were not? And should my people hater away  
 the glory that dwelt among them, for powers that power have none?  
 10 In heaven and deepest witness, you heavens, the night, crumble in  
 11 vain! Two wrongs this people of mine committed; me they forsook,

\* There is some doubt whether the text of this verse has been rightly preserved; the meaning of the Hebrew text is given above, since the Latin has an unintelligible expression "the despised, ye heavens, now this, and crumble in vain, ye gates of it."



the fountain of living water, and therefore they dug cisterns of their own, hating cisterns, that water had none to give them.

What, is the race of Israel a slave, a chattel, that it should pass from a hand to hand as the price of war? Boasting Jews have claimed it for a their prey; the host lies waste, the cities burnt and desolate. Even the Egyptians have come from Memphis and Thebes, to strip thee bare; tell me, Israel, how came this? Was it not because thou hadst forsaken the Lord thy God, that all these had led thee?<sup>1</sup>

What, wouldst thou run to Egypt, to Assyria, and didst thy thirst is with Nile or Euphrates? Here is the very proof of thy wickedness, the moment of thy unfaithfulness; see how ill it has gone with thee, says the Lord, the God of hosts, ever since thou didst forsake the Lord thy God, ever since thou didst bethink the fear of me! It is an old tale, we know, how thou didst break in pieces the yoke of my dominion, didst sever all the bands between us, crying out, I will serve no more! Thou went off to play the wamus, the nearest hill-top or secret forest for thy bowmen. Alas, vineyard of mine, that I planted with such care, is never a worthless shrub! How is it thou hast played me false, and art no vineyard of mine?

As, we sigh for thy dancing, spread forth as thou might, that is with grief I shall tell thee, says the Lord God. Nay, never boast as that thou art wedded, to country-side gods hast no concern; bethink thee of the traffickers in Shechem valley, and read there the story of thy doings. Camel never found its way so lightly; wild man to its as female dove, turning its mate, never stepped the fire in its blood more uncontrollably! Little search it needs to find thy haunts, as his mate in spring-time.<sup>2</sup> Restless of unshod feet, of padding thence, as thou criest not despairingly, Return I cannot; to alien gods all my heart is vowed, and I must follow still!

Thief caught in the net has less cause to blush than the men of Israel, as king and prince, priest and prophet, with the rest. Stock of wood is and block of stone they talked as the father that had begotten them; on me they turned their backs, and gave me never a glance. And now,

<sup>1</sup> vs. 22-27. Some think these verses have been misplaced. If they refer to the times of Josiah, they must be understood as addressed, not to the kingdom of Judah, but to that Northern country which, since the Ten Tribes were taken into exile, had been detachable ground between the empires of Assyria and Egypt.

<sup>2</sup> This verse is addressed to Judah, and refers to marriages made at the time to secure foreign alliances; cf. verse 36 below. For "Nile" the Latin version gives "valley waters" translating literally of "transforming".

<sup>3</sup> The last part of the verse is not easy to interpret. It runs, literally, "Those who look for her will have no laborious search; they will find her in her search (seeking) to the Lute, her monthly period."

in their darkness, it is Up, Lord, and bring us rescue! What are those  
 when gods show malice for thyself? Didst thou rise up and abhor thee  
 in the hour of peril; gods show haste a mercy, no city of thine, Judah,  
 but thou hast us ever! And would you still impudently? Nay, says  
 the Lord, you have forsaken me, me and all. In vain I have anointed  
 them, all those sons of Judah; still you turned your words against the  
 prophets, bloodthirsty as lions.

Out upon this age! Here is the Lord's message, give good heed to it.  
 Have I shown myself unkindly to Israel, like a desert, like a land  
 without by shadows, that my own people has resolved to keep in  
 distress, and cover my way as covered? What should I still expect her  
 justice, beside her sinfulness? And my own people, all those long days,  
 has forgotten me! What avail it to justify thyself, in hope of winning  
 back my love, when thou thyself dost blazon so openly thy doings, thy  
 first misdoings? There is blood on thy hands, the blood of innocents  
 false and innocent. It is not thieves I have found, but men guilty of  
 such crimes as these.<sup>1</sup> And will thou declarest thyself innocent of any  
 fault, will thou biddest me withhold my vengeance! Come, let me  
 answer thy plea of innocence.

How light a woman thou art, ever as thy old woe! Not less than  
 thy hopes of Assyria, thy hopes of Egypt shall be disappointed; desert,  
 no, thou shalt come away mingling thy hands; all the confidence thou  
 hast the Lord seems to destroy; thou shalt make us shift with Egypt.

## CHAPTER 3

WHAT is the law of marriage life? Let wife that has been put  
 away by her husband marry a second, can she afterwards return  
 to the first? That were shame and defilement.<sup>2</sup> And thou with many  
 lovers hast played the woman; yet come back to me, the Lord says,  
 and thou shalt find welcome. Lift up thy eyes to the bare hills, and tell  
 me, which of them has not been the voice of thy shame? Like a high-  
 way robber thou didst lurk by the road-side, waiting for thy lovers;

<sup>1</sup> *see. 22, 23.* There is probably corruption in the text. In the Latin version it reads literally: "Why dost thou strive to show that thy way is good, in order to seek love, who answerest but: 'trough Our wickedness the ways and the blood of guilt and innocence needs to be shed on thy wings?' I have not found these in justice, but over all the things which I have mentioned above." In the Hebrew text, "wings" means "sinners" and the word translated "trough" means "house" (reading *haz. 22, 23*). The translation given assumes a reference to verse 23 above.

<sup>2</sup> To the woman herself, according to the Latin version; to the whole marriage, according to the Hebrew text (*cf. Levit. 24-25*).

by thy heartless wickedness the whole land was defiled. I called thee to account for it; heaven's dew was stanch'd, and the law rain did not fall, and still never a blush on thy hater's brow! Little wonder thou shouldst have been crying out to me, since then, calling me false, calling me the loved friend of thy girlhood's days: was there no quarreling my anger? Would it smoulder as fire ever? Ay, all this thou saiest, but still wouldst go on sinning, still wouldst have thy way.

It was in the days of king Josiah the Lord said to me: Israel's apostasy thou hast seen, how she ever beset herself to the narrow high hill or leafy wood, to play the woman there; and now, when I called her back to me in spite of it, she would not come. Now mark the treachery of her sister Judah. She too had seen it all, how I had hidden apostasy Israel began, and given her a writ of separation; and now treacherous Judah, unshamed, went off in her turn to play the woman. So upward, so to women, she defiled all that land of hers, giving herself to lovers made of wood and stone! After all the warnings I had given, Judah, the treacherous, would never come back to me in good earnest, only with lying professions, the Lord says.

And the Lord told me: Better than Judah's treachery, the apostasy of a Israel daughter to be acquired. Carry this message of mine to the north country: Come back to me, apostate Israel, the Lord says, and there shall be no wrath of mine against you; I am merciful, the Lord says, and vengeance shall not last for ever. Only acknowledge thy sin first, he tells thee, in desisting the Lord thy God and breaking thyself to the bowens of strange lovers, deaf to my call. Wanderings hence, so the Lord bids you come back to him, and renew your toils; by east and west, from this city or that, from this day or that, he will claim you for his own and bring you back to him, and you shall have sheep or herds of his own choice to guide you well and prudently. After that, so the Lord says, when all is growth and fertility, no longer shall you have the Ark of the Lord's Covenant for your rallying-cry; from thought and memory it will have passed away, no day ever shall be bestowed on the fastidious of it. It is Jerusalem, now will speak of as the Lord's (Jerome) there at Jerusalem all the nations of the world will meet in the Lord's name, the false aims of their perverted hearts forgotten. When that time comes, Judah and Israel will be united; together they will come back from the north country to the land I gave your fathers for their home.

Must I ever be offering thee warnings, and a land so fair that all the people of the world might envy that its possessor? Must I ever be pleading with thee to acknowledge me as thy father, and forsake my guidance no more? Hitherto, the Lord says, nothing could I win as

- 11 from Judah but a false Jude's contempt. Now, then, yeader hill-pieces,  
 another cry is heard; a cry of mourning and lament from the sons  
 of Israel, over the wrong path they have chosen in forgetting the Lord  
 12 their God. Wand'ring hearts, come back to me, and all your rebel acts  
 shall be pardoned.  
 13 See, we come to thee; art thou not the Lord our God? The many  
 gods of hill and mountain side have played us false; we know it now;  
 we know now that Israel must look to the Lord our God for deliverance.  
 14 Even since the days of our youth all the hopes our fathers had, of life  
 and land, of son and daughter, are lost; the worship of shame has  
 15 cheated us.<sup>1</sup> Lie we down with shame for our bed, and let reproach  
 be all our covering; sinners from our youth upwards, we and our  
 fathers before us, against the Lord our God; the Lord our God, and  
 we would not listen to his voice!

## CHAPTER 4

D<sup>O</sup> not retrace thy steps, Israel, and return to me, do not cast  
 away the abominations that offend my sight, and in that mind  
 1 perish; let but thy faith, As the Lord is a living God! be a true faith,  
 in loyal duty armed; then shall all the nations learn to bless and to praise  
 him.

- 2 And to the sons of Juda, in Jerusalem, this is the Lord's message:  
 Yours to drive a new harrow, see now my plough among the beams.  
 3 You must be circumcised afresh, sons of Juda; children of Jerusalem,  
 of Isaac's defilement rid yourselves, if you would not see my vengeance  
 burn like fire upon you, as your scheming nation has deserved.  
 4 News for Juda, news that shall echo through Jerusalem; tell it out,  
 sound the trumpet over the countryside! Loud be the cry abroad, for  
 5 all to muster and to man the fortified citadel! Raise the standard in  
 Zion, and rally to it with all haste! Here is peril I am bringing upon  
 6 you from the north country, here is great calamity. Round is the  
 lay from his lair; he is sick, ready to prey on the nations; he is marching  
 out to make earth a desert, and the cities too shall be laid waste, and  
 7 stand there unoccupied. Well may you gird yourselves with sackcloth,  
 well may you beat the breast and cry aloud; for of the Lord's vengeance  
 8 has not passed us by. When that day comes, the Lord says, heart of king

<sup>1</sup> Literally, "Ever since the days of our youth shame has deceived the seedling  
 of our fathers, their Belias and Israels, sons and daughters." But it is more probable  
 that the word "shame" stands here as a pious substitute for the name of the god  
 Baal.

and heart of prince shall be dismayed; dumb-witness the priest, the prophet, the seer.

Alas, alas, Lord God, said I,<sup>1</sup> can it be that thou hast deceived thy people, deceived Jerusalem, by telling them they should have peace, and here is the sword threatening our very lives?

When that time comes, verily shall be passed on this people of a mine, and on Jerusalem: My people's manner ways are like the hot wind<sup>2</sup> that flows from the desert slopes, that will scorch whosoever meet it. And in return, I will summon to my side a wind that blows full, and so I will plead my cause against them. An overwhelming cloud the invader shall be, his chariots compared like the storm-wind, his horses swifter than eagles. Alas the day, we are ruined!

Now, Jerusalem, as thy life thou lovest, rid thy heart of guile with a thou, none come to harbour those false thoughts of thine! None is a more cruel foe than God, how are monstrous tidings<sup>3</sup> from the hill-country of Ephraim: evil is far and wide, Jerusalem has heard the brail of her w lookings coming from a distant land, that even now take their harlequin among the cities of Judah; even now they keep watch over the countryside about her, the Lord says, and all because she defied my vengeance. All deeds and all counsel of thine have brought all this upon thee; the due reward of thy wickedness, how bitter the taste of it, how it wrings the heart! Deep, deep rends the wound; my every heart-strings echo lament; no rest is mine, since my ear caught hoarse of trumpet and cry of battle. Take upon tale of ruin, a whole reined laid waste, no cabin or house spared, suddenly, all in a moment. Always the sight of men fleeing, always the sound of the trumpet is in my ear!

Ah, restless people of mine, that would not acknowledge me; blind as fools, far mistaken as thieves, in well-doing so unreasoned!<sup>4</sup>

Backward I looked, and all was void and empty; forward, and in heaven no light shone; looked at mountains and hill-side, and ere to them air and torments; looked for some sign of man, and in vain; the very birds in heaven had all taken flight. It was a garden I looked in

<sup>1</sup> According to some manuscripts of the Septuagint Greek, the true reading is 'said thou.' This would evidently improve the rest of the context.

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text may also be interpreted as meaning 'A hot wind is coming in the direction of the despoils of my people.' But the use of language is in any case forced, and it may be doubted whether the true text of verse 12 and 13 has been preserved to us.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'the making known of an evil'; according to the Hebrew text, 'the making known of distress.'

<sup>4</sup> The sudden introduction of Almighty God as the speaker in this verse marks the entry of the passage, and some attribute it to Isaiah's work.

11, but a garden unenclosed; no city in it but had polished at the Lord's  
 12 glance, before the frown of his vengeance. For it was so the Lord's  
 13 entrance was; the whole countryside should be abandoned, and still  
 14 he will not have taken full toll. At his sentence, earth should groan  
 and heaves grow dark with sorrow, yet of his decree there should  
 15 be no repending; he would not go back from it. Everywhere, at the  
 16 voice of anger and vengeance, the townsfolk flee away, take to the hills<sup>a</sup>  
 and climb their high rocks; never a town but is left deserted of its  
 17 inhabitants. And thou, Jerusalem, when thy turn comes to be despoiled,  
 what stuff wilt thou call? Woe was it to dress in conflict, and deck  
 thyself with chains of gold, and with amaranth darken thy eyes; woe  
 was that art, thy towers are woe of that woe, and thy life a forfeit.  
 18 Cities of requital I hear, as from a woman in the throes of travail; it  
 is queen Sam, gasping out her life, and crying with hands outspread,  
 Woe is me, I swoon away, here in the slaughter-house!

## CHAPTER 5

G O the ruins of Jerusalem, search the errors of it with line and  
 1 say; and if you find one man there that faithfully does his duty,  
 2 and keeps truth, then the city shall be pardoned. Nay, though they  
 call on the living God to be their witness, they beset themselves  
 none the less.  
 3 On faithfulness, Lord, thy eyes are set. And those, when thou seest  
 them, are contemptible wily; when thou visitest them to earth, will  
 not hard beproof; hence are their upholding as rock, and return they  
 4 will not. But indeed, thought I, perhaps they are poor men and foolish,  
 that have never learnt the divine command, or what their God requires  
 5 of them. I will go and have speech with the men of men; what the  
 divine command is, what their God requires of them, these will surely  
 know. And there I found conspiring, as some other, to throw off the  
 6 yoke, to break through their bonds. What wonder if they are attacked  
 and despoiled by robbers, that leave the woods at night-time, stealthily  
 as lion or wolf or prowling leopard, to besiege their towns and catch  
 all who venture forth? So many their rebellions, so absolute their  
 defiance!  
 7 For all this, how should I pardon them? Thy sons have deserted me,  
 by gods that see no gods their sons are taken; full-fed with my bounty,  
 they left their wedded troth, to waste in the house of a stranger  
 8 bold in their adultery as station or grass nothing for his name. What,  
 shall I let all this pass me by, the Lord says; shall I not take my fill

<sup>a</sup> In the Hebrew text, "hillsides"

of vengeance against such a nation as this? Scale these ramparts, and a fall to pillage, not taking full toll even yet; rest on the ships of yonder vine, the Lord will not claim them. Offensively they have defied me, the Lord says, Israel and Juda both; they have vexed me; Nay, they tell a new tale, this is news of his doing, none shall ever befall us, we shall have neither slaughter nor famine here: the prophets did but waste a breath, no word of revelation made to them; on their own heads be it!

Vain words; but not vainly the Lord, the God of hosts, has spoken; a flaming word of his he has entrusted to my lips, and fast this people shall be for their desecrating. A nation from the army I am summoning, is even now, to the strack; a warlike nation, of several lineage, whose very weapon shall be strange to them, no word of it well understood; greedily in the tomb their quivers gape, and they are warriors all. They shall rob thee of harvest and of food, rob thee of use and laughter, o rob thee of flock and herd, rob thee of vine and fig-tree; and all the strongholds, wherein thy hope lies, as the sword's point shall be overturned. Yet even then, the Lord says, I will not take full toll of thee. Ask you why the Lord has so much tolerated you, this is to be my answer: Did you yet forsake me, to worship alien gods in your own land? Alas gods you shall worship in an alien land, for your punishment.

To Israel's race proclaim it, for all Jude to hear. Listen, foolish as folk and superstitious, with righteous eyes, men that had as well been dead! Have you no fear of me, the Lord says, will you stand unmoved in my presence? Was it not I gave the sea its frontier of sand, by my armed decree inviolate? Valiant the waves be! and men, they cannot pass beyond it. A faithless heart, a rebellious heart this people of mine has; in a moment they twerve aside from the path, and are gone; never a thought of remorse for the Lord their God, who gives them is wetness and spring rains when the time comes, and secures them a full harvest. It is your wrongdoing that has altered their course; it is guilt such as yours, blessings are denied.

Godless men these are seeing my people that lie in wait like any a hunter, but none and trap of theirs is set to catch men. Never was it seen so full of birds, as their houses of wealth all grown; men of power and riches, pampered and sleek, they defy my will past all healing; as nations they stray to the widow, right to the orphan, justice to the poor. What, shall I let all this pass me by, the Lord says, shall I not to take my fill of vengeance against such a nation as this? A wonder is this land has seen beyond all belief; here are prophets that utter a lying message, priests that clap their hands in applause, and this people of mine is well content. And what shift will you make when the end comes?

## CHAPTER 6

- R**ALLY, tribesmen of Benjamin: that live in the midst of Jerusalem;  
 at Thinnis sound the trumpet, raise the standard on Bethacem;  
 it is from the north peril may be seen coming, peril of great calamity.<sup>1</sup>  
 2 Peveh Sime, all too fair the women, all too delicate! Alas, what strange  
 shepherds are these, what troops that follow them? See how they  
 pluck their mares, about her! See how many oak has at his back, and  
 3 there must be pasture for them all! Hushed! we the attack on the city;  
 to move now were best, and march up under the light of moon! Flap  
 upon it, the day is already spent, the shadows of evening lengthen  
 4 already! Up, then, march we on by night, by night plunder their houses!  
 5 Down with yonder trees, the Lord of hosts says, and build siege-  
 works about Jerusalem; here is a city must be called to account for  
 6 all the opposition that is harboured there. None closer kept its ways  
 so fresh, as the her store of wickedness; no town from her but of wrong  
 7 and waste, no night I see done but distress and violence. Jerusalem,  
 he warned in times, did my love thus that faith, and I will make  
 a rule of doom, a land unshaken.  
 8 Israel, says the Lord of hosts, is a vineyard for the gleaning; no  
 9 cluster shall be left; back with those, vineyard, to the breasted! Vain  
 appeal, whom shall I cite for witness of it? Oh that it should fall on  
 men uncontradicted, oh that God's word should be slighted, and that  
 10 no witness! Nay, but the divine anger burns within me, I can flout  
 no longer. I must blast out my message to all, children playing in  
 the streets, no less than warriors met in council; none shall be spared,  
 11 husband or wife, greybeard or man of many summers. Flowers, buds  
 and wedded vines, all must pass into other hands; none that dwell  
 12 in Jude, the Lord says, but shall feel my vengeance. High and low,  
 all-gates gain they cover; teachers on the ways alike of prophet and  
 13 of prince; how lies my people grievously hurt, and they send her uncon-  
 comedly; All's well, they say, all's well, when in truth all goes awry.  
 14 Shamed they needs must be, that did so deviously; shamed, but never  
 ashamed, for indeed they have lost the power to blush? their to fall

<sup>1</sup> The Latin version does not make clear, what is evidently intended, that the men of Benjamin (to whose country the people belonged) are invited to escape from Jerusalem, and hold their own in the hill country of the north.

<sup>2</sup> The text here apparently says, "They are unshaken, because they have done abominably; so rather than are not confounded, they do not know how to blench." Probably the verb 'to be confounded' is used in two different senses, (i) to be ignominiously disappointed of one's aim, (ii) to require shame, one's shame in the wrong.



until the summer rain, crushed to earth, the Lord says, when I call all to account.

The Lord's message was, Halt at the cross-roads, look well, and mark yourselves which path it was that would you in good stead long ago. That path follows, and you shall find rest for your souls. But follow they would not; and anon, I would see watchmen on the heights; let it thus only listen, when these sounded the trumpet; but listen they would not. To the carious, then, I proclaim it; let my doom be pronounced in the public ear: all earth shall hear it. I mean to bring upon us this people of mine the punishment their rebellious wickedness has earned, so that to my call, of my law to defend. What profit it to offer me incense from Saba, and the fragrant odours that grow for ever? Unwelcome to me your burnt-offerings, undesired your victims. This does the Lord pronounce; I mean so to smite this people of mine that they shall stumble in their ending all of them, father and son together, neighbour with neighbour, friend with friend.

Here is a people marching from the north country, the Lord says, as a great nation from the world's end. Arrow and shield<sup>1</sup> they ply, and as their hand bears pity none; loud their battle-cry as the roaring of the sea. So they ride on, as warriors ride, poor folk, they smite. Unstayed our hands drop at the very mention of it; grief overcomes us, sharp as the pangs of travail; forbidden is the countryside, the high roads untravelled; the drawn sword chariots, and peril is all about us. Jude, poor widowed queen, put sackcloth about thee and as cover thyself with ashes; as for an only son make loud lament; without warning the spoiler will be upon us.

I have a task for thee to perform among my people; thou shalt be as my trusty assayer, putting the quality of their lives to the test. There is hidden silver that go about on their shining armour, what are they but copper and iron, base metal all? Belovèd have done their work, the lead streams away in the fire, carrying nothing with it; vain, useless, thy woe, the dress remains unspiced. Refuse after they shall be sifted, has not the Lord refused them?

## CHAPTER 7

A MESSAGE came from the Lord to Jeremiah, bidding him take his stand at the temple gate, and there proclaim aloud: Listen to this word of the Lord, men of Jude, that make your way is through them given to worship him. Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, I

<sup>1</sup> According to the Hebrew text, 'bow and javelin.'

- Among your lives and your things, if you would have me dwell here  
 among you. Misleading are those words all about you, The temple  
 of the Lord, here, The temple of the Lord, there; do not trust them.<sup>1</sup>  
 Will you not amend your lives and your things, giving not men violence  
 against men, not oppressing the alien, the orphan, the widow,  
 nor in these practices putting innocent men to death, nor counting,  
 no-year ruin, the gods of other nations, then indeed I will make my  
 dwelling here among you, in the land which was my gift to your fathers  
 from the beginning to the end of time. You put your trust in flattering  
 hopes, which can nothing send you: theft, murder, adultery, the false  
 oath, libelous to Baal, the covering of alien gods that are no gods  
 of yours, nothing comes a-til, if only you can come and stand in  
 my presence, here in this house, the shrine of my name, and tell your-  
 selves you have made amends for all these your detestable doings!  
 What, does this house, the shrine of such a name, count for so much  
 than a den of thieves, in eyes like yours? Think you, the Lord says,  
 that eternal God has no eyes to see it?<sup>2</sup> Go and visit that sanctuary  
 of mine at Silo, where of old my power ruled; look well, what havoc  
 I have made of it, to punish the misdoings of Israel, that were my people  
 too. Because of so much done amiss, the Lord says, because you would  
 not listen when I cried early at your doors, or answer any call of mine,  
 in this house, shrine of my name and centre of your hopes, this house  
 I gave to you and to your fathers, shall fire as Silo fired. All those  
 breakers of years, the whole stock of Ephraim, I banished from my  
 presence, and you shall be banished in your turn.  
 Nor do thou, Jeremiah,<sup>3</sup> think to plead for this people of mine, or  
 take up in their name the burden of prayer and prayer; dream my will,  
 thou shalt have no hearing. Canst thou not see for thyself what all  
 deeds are done in the townships of Jude, in the very streets of Jeru-  
 salem? See the children gathering sticks, the father lighting a fire,  
 the mother breaking dough, and all to make cakes for the queen of  
 heaven! See how they offer libelous to alien gods, to despise me! Yet  
 not to me they do despise, the Lord says, rather to themselves; every  
 hope of theirs shall fail them. This warning, then, the Lord God  
 sends them: Pury and indignation of mine are burning against this

<sup>1</sup> The original says, 'Do not trust in deceptive words, saying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, there.' It is generally assumed, and the Latin version implies, that spoken words are meant. The rendering given above supposes the existence of sign-boards here and there, within view of the gate, marking where the temple portions began.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, in the Latin version, 'Thou art, I have seen, the Lord says.' The Hebrew text has merely, 'Behold, I also have seen it, the Lord says.'

<sup>3</sup> The word 'Jeremiah' is not repeated in the original.

plow, sow and reap, woodland tree and growing crop; and when the fire is lit, there shall be no quenching it.

A message from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: No more be a stammerer to distinguish between burnt-sacrifice and offering; see for yourselves among the skulls of all skulls! Burnt-sacrifices, offerings, one of a kind was my theme when I gave commandments to your fathers at the time of their deliverance from Egypt;<sup>1</sup> my word of command as to them was, Obey my bidding, if I am to be your God, you my people; follow the path I have marked out for you, so you hope to prosper. And did they listen? Hearing they gave me none, their own will, the a false aim of their corrupt hearts was all the rule they lived by; still turned their backs on me, and refused to look my way; so it has been as since your fathers left Egypt, so it is yet. No day departed but I was at work behind, sending my servants to prophesy to them, but still they would not listen, still hearing they gave me none; robbers under my yoke, they would their own fathers in wickedness. All this time shall I say to them, but they will not listen to them; they will still go unrepentant. Then tell them, Here is a people who will not listen to the voice of a their own God, or accept reproof from him; loyalty is dead, the word is on their lips no more.

Get off, Jerusalem,<sup>2</sup> these loads of thine, and cast them away from a thee; load in the hills with thy lament; on a guilty age, the Lord has pronounced sentence of banishment and rejection. The men of a Juda have defiled my will, the Lord says; foul idols they have set up in the house that is the sanctuary of my name, and dearly profaned it; in the valley of Ben-Hinnom round the hill-slopes of Topheth, a where they sacrifice their own sons and daughters in the furnace, a fire not of my bidding, not of my imagining. And now, the Lord says, a time is coming when no more will be heard of Topheth or Ben-Hinnom; it will be called The Valley of the Slain, men will be finding room for their dead in Topheth, because where burying-ground is none. Nay, Juda shall be barren for birds that fly in air, for beasts a that roam the earth; and never a man left to drive them away. In the a townships of Juda, in the streets of Jerusalem, cries of joy and mirth shall be heard no more, voice of bridegroom and of bride shall be heard no more; the whole land will have turned into a wilderness.

<sup>1</sup> *lev.* 22-23. The burnt-sacrifice was offered on God's altar, unlike the other sacrifices (e.g., the welcome-offering) in which the victim was shared between God and his worshippers. Here, the prophet (probably) suggests that ceremonial distinctions of this kind may well be abandoned, since the aim of Juda here in any case might make offerings incompatible. Verses 22 and 23 should probably be understood as implying, not that the moral law was superior in time to the ceremonial precepts, but that it wholly overshadowed them in importance.

<sup>2</sup> The name is not repeated in the original.

## CHAPTER 9

**A**LL the tombs in Jerusalem will be rifled, the Lord says, when  
 1 *that day comes*, tomb of king and prince of Juda's line, tomb of  
 2 *priest and prophet, tomb of common citizen*; *ashed their bones shall*  
 3 *lie, with sun and moon and all the starry host to witness it, their gods*  
 4 *abandoned; gods so loved, so well served, so hailed, so feared, so*  
 5 *adored! Those bones there shall be none to gather, none to bury; they*  
 6 *shall lie like dung on the bare ground. And the living shall envy the*  
 7 *dead, so poor a home shall be left, the Lord of hosts says, to the carcass*  
 8 *of a guilty man, in the far lands to which I have banished them.*

9 Give them this message from the Lord: *A man kills but he dies, and*  
 10 *but to retrieve his gods: how is it that this rebellious people of mine*  
 11 *at Jerusalem has rebelled so obstinately? They cling to their sinners,*  
 12 *and return no more. Linger I never so strongly, wholesome word*  
 13 *I bear none; never a man that repents of his sin, asks himself what*  
 14 *his life has been. No, each one follows his own bent, reckless as war-*  
 15 *riors chasing live birds. Yet the lion, circling in air, knows its prey;*  
 16 *vulture-dove can gaze, and swallow, and seek, when they stand alone!*  
 17 *Why for my people the divine appointment passes unobserved? What,*  
 18 *still hearing that you are wise, that the Lord's law finds its home*  
 19 *among you? Nay, but the scribes, with their false penmanship, have con-*  
 20 *structed all truths. In all their wisdom, how disappointed, how bewildered,*  
 21 *how dismayed! God's word they cast away, and wisdom left them.*  
 22 *Alas, loath their wives shall have, alas sinners their lands; high and*  
 23 *low, ill-gotten gains they seek; treacherous the ways alike of prophet*  
 24 *and of priest: how like my people grievously bent, and they find her*  
 25 *unconsecrated. Ah! well, they say, all's well, when is truth all gone*  
 26 *and sin. Shamed they needs must be, that did so deliberately, shamed,*  
 27 *but never ashamed, for indeed they have lost the power to think*  
 28 *clear to fall in the common rut, crushed to earth, the Lord says,*  
 29 *when I call all to account!'* When the time comes for gathering, the  
 30 Lord says, *grief is none on the vine, nor fig on the fig-tree, the very leaves*  
 31 *are withered; and I have given them . . . what has passed them by.'*

<sup>1</sup> The birds cannot be literally identified, some would alter 'lion' to 'hawk,' and 'dove' to 'swallow.'

<sup>2</sup> See. 10-11. The apostrophe of *they* may be overlooked, but is more probably due to a scribe's error than any meaning here in some Greek manuscripts.

<sup>3</sup> The last clause of this verse does not yield any natural sense, either in the Hebrew or in the Latin, and it seems likely that the text as we have it is defective.

Why do we linger here? Muster me, and man the stronghold, and wait in there uncomplaining; since the Lord our God has imposed on us, given us a drought to dull the senses, the Lord, whose ear we have offended.<sup>1</sup> How we long for better times, and no relief comes to us; for remedy at last, and danger still threatens! All the way from Dan to the noise of horses reaches us, gallant chargers neighing in their pride, all earth trembles with the echoes of it; as they come, bearing ruin to field and crop, to city and citadel. With such a serpent-headed I am plaguing you, the Lord says, charm is none shall rid you of its bite.

Grief beyond all grief, that burns down my heart within me! So it cries my own people in its distress from a country far away. Does the Lord dwell in Zion no longer? Is the fortress by his king?

And she? What of the idols, what of the silver gods that turned me into her enemy?

Herewith she is over, ruinous is gone, and still no deliverance has come to us. Wounded she lies, my own people, and is not her wound a mine? Shall I not go mourning, bewildered by grief? Grows she balm in Gilead no more, is the healer's art lost there, that the people I love should be wounded, and the wound will not close?

## CHAPTER 9

**W**HILE-HEAD were this head of mine, spot of a fountain there eyes,<sup>2</sup> day nor night should serve me to weep enough for my country's doom. Oh that some lodging-place in the wilderness for me were dwelling-place, far from the haunts of my own people, that are faithless lovers, rebel subjects all!

Doubtful tongues, treacherous is the hidden archer's bow, lowers it that level it over their fellow-countrymen, wrong leading to wrong, and my claims forgotten the Lord says. Neighbour of neighbour a brow, kinship let kinship never trust; none goes about to overdraw thee more craftily than brother of thine or friend. None but I will overreach his fellow with lies; all their schooling is in falsehood, all their striving for ill-gotten gain. Is what a nest of treason thou a

<sup>1</sup> 'Uncomplaining' and 'silence' represent a Hebrew verb which normally has that sense, but is interpreted by some, here and in a few other passages, as meaning 'to do.' 'A drought to dull the senses', literally, 'want of a man', the person so described in Hebrew is precisely the 'gulf' uttered to our Lord at his Crucifixion (Mt. 27.35).

<sup>2</sup> 'Eye' at a fountain, in the sense of openings. The Hebrew words for 'head' and 'eye' are also used for springs of water.

- double And such reason, the Lord says, as will acknowledge as  
 1 claim of mine. This morning, then, he utters, the Lord of hosts: The  
 fire for them! They must be tried in the crucible; what other choice  
 2 has my faithless people left me? Tongues that would lie as oaths,  
 with deceit for poison, and the smooth word of friend laying snare  
 3 for friend; what, shall I for all this pass me by, the Lord says; shall I  
 not take my fill of vengeance against such a nation as this?
- 4 And dogs be made for the hills, lament for all the wide pasture-  
 lands, that are scorched bare, and left unswept; about the herdman's  
 call; birds that nested there, cattle that grazed there, fled and gone.
- 5 I decree to this Jerusalem like a heap of dust, the hill of weapons;  
 the streets of Jude shall stand desolate, with none to inhabit them.
- 6 Come now, who is wise enough to read the riddle, to what spokes-  
 man shall the Lord's proclamation be entrusted, when he tells us why  
 the land lies ruined, burnt up like the wilderness, and never a pass-  
 7 age? It is because they broke the commandment I gave them, the  
 8 Lord says, would not heed my call or follow it, because they had  
 recourse to ill devices of their own, and so the gods of the coun-  
 9 try-side, whose worship their fathers taught them. This doom, then,  
 the Lord of hosts pronounces, the God of Israel: On morrow I will  
 10 feed this people of mine, yea shall be the drink I give them; for say  
 I will scatter them, in countries never they, never their fathers knew;  
 and the word shall follow those belied, to exterminate them.
- 11 This too the Lord of hosts says, the God of Israel: Search all about,  
 and find mourners, mistresses of their craft, and such as will answer  
 12 your summons with all haste; no time let them lose in making dole for  
 13 us; weep every eye, be every eye-lid shrouded with tears. Listen  
 to Sion's lament: Alas, what sorrows, alas, what sorrows! Our land lies  
 14 desecrated, our houses in ruins! To you, women, the Lord's word comes;  
 this is matter for your howling. Ye daughters of years, neighbours of  
 15 years, such the sad melody of your lament; here is death looking  
 in at our windows, finding its way into our palace, and soon there  
 will be no children playing out of doors, nor grown men going to  
 16 and fro in the streets. A message from the Lord like dung they shall  
 lie on the ground, the corpse of the dead, like the sheep left after shep-  
 17 ing is done, that none is at pains to gather.
- 18 This, too, is the Lord's message: Never boast, if thou art wise, of  
 thy wisdom, if thou art strong, of thy strength, if thou art rich, of  
 19 thy riches; boast is none worth having, save that insight which gives  
 knowledge of me; in all my dealings with mankind so merciful a Lord,

<sup>1</sup> The word in the Hebrew text has represented by 'weapons' is generally rendered 'jacks' by modern commentators.

the Lord says, as just, so faithful, and a lover of such dealings where they are found.<sup>1</sup>

A time of mourning there shall be, the Lord says, for all the nations as that promise circumlocution, Egypt, Judah, Edom, Ammon, Moab; as they shall be all one with the desert folk that clip their firebrands bare. The whole world is uncircumcised; all have hearts uncircumcised, and heard with the ear.<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER 10

**L**ISTEN, men of Israel, to the Lord's utterance concerning you.<sup>3</sup> Thus says the Lord: Do not learn to follow Greece ways, or be dismayed by portents in the heavens, as the Gentiles are. How empty is the observation the heathen cast! What is the stuff upon which the carver works but a trunk of wood, filled by an axe-cut in the finest? Only he has tricked it out with gold and silver, bangles and mail must do their work, but it should fall to pieces. Idols cunningly placed as palm-trees,<sup>4</sup> yet dumb as they, and men must carry them to and fro, for movement they have none! To these give no reverence; they can neither see nor make thee.

No, Lord, thou hast no rival; no great thou art, so great is the sovereignty of thy name. King of all nations, how should we not fear thee in that majesty of thine? Bend the world as it will of wisdom or of empire, none can rival thee. Ah, folly and blindness, ah, fixed a mocking, wisdom as wood itself! Ah, bring pieces of silver from Tharsis, gold from Ophir, it is all man's work, fruits from the soil; bring robes of blue and purple, they are man's work still! But the Lord is a God in good earnest, a God that lives, that has eternal dominion, and can make earth tremble with his frown, strike the nations powerless when he thunders them.

<sup>1</sup> This paragraph is thought by some to have been accidentally misplaced in this little apparent connection with its proper context.

<sup>2</sup> *vs.* 23-26. This appears to be the same intended by a passage of considerable complexity.

<sup>3</sup> *vs.* 1-15. It may be doubted whether this chapter is more than a collection of certain isolated utterances made by the prophet. Verses 1-15 read as if they were addressed to men already in exile, not to men distressed with exile as a punishment for their own sins.

<sup>4</sup> 'Cunningly-placed as palm-trees'; literally, 'shaded into the shade of a palm-tree'; the place of metal in which the wooden core of the idol was concealed may have suggested the figure of a palm-trunk. But some understood the Hebrew text of thinking 'like a wine-crow in a garden of nutmegs' of the day.

- 12 No place on earth or under heaven, you must tell the nations, for  
gods that neither heaven nor earth could fashion.<sup>1</sup>
- 13 Power that made the earth, wisdom that orders nature, foreigner  
14 that spread out the heavens! At the sound of his voice, what rustling  
of the waters overhead! He summons up the cloud-veils from the  
world's end, turns the lightning into a rain-storm, brings the winds  
15 out of his store-house!<sup>2</sup> Not justy, then, is man's claim, how easy a  
thing is the carver's workmanship; after all his pains, only a lifeline  
16 crumb-cake! Pond imaginations, antic figures, when the time comes for  
17 rethinking, they will be heard of no more. Not such the worship that is  
the heirloom of Jacob's line; their God is the God who made all things,  
lured his posterity. Just, the God of hosts, his name.
- 18 Take up from the ground, your bestrode men, the load of shame.<sup>3</sup>
- 19 This time, the Lord says, I mean to haul them far away, the dwellers  
in this land, and gone-dwellers shall be theirs, that they may be found ...<sup>4</sup>
- 20 Alas, for my wounding, for the grievous hurt that is mine! Hidden  
21 if I had thought to bear my sickness, if this were all; but now what am I?  
A tear broken down, all its ropes severed: all my children have deserted  
me, and are no more to be found; who shall take the pole, who shall  
22 stretch the cartline now? And the cause of it? Unskillful shepherds  
that would have no recourse to the Lord; see how their art has failed  
23 them, and all the flock is scattered far and wide! A sound comes to  
me that brings tidings with it, a great war from the north country: all  
Jacob is to become a desert, a lair for serpents<sup>5</sup> now.
- 24 Lord, I know it well enough, it is not for man to choose his lot;  
25 not human wisdom guides our steps aright. Chance me, Lord, but  
with due reverence kept; not as thy anger demands, or thou wilt grind  
26 me to dust. Pour out this indignation of thine upon the nations that  
do not acknowledge thee, on the tribes that never invoke thy name,  
by whom Jacob is denounced, devoured and devastated, and all his  
pride scattered to the winds.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This verse is pluralized, not in pure Hebrew, but in the Aramaic dialect, as if it were written under the influence of the captivity.

<sup>2</sup> For the later part of this verse cf. Ps. 134-5.

<sup>3</sup> In the Hebrew text simply 'my load.'

<sup>4</sup> It seems clear that there must be some variation at the end of this verse, whether we read 'that they may be found,' or (as in the Hebrew text) 'that they may find.'

<sup>5</sup> Or perhaps 'lizards' as in pure Hebrew.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Ps. 58-6, 7.



## CHAPTER 11

HERE is a message which came from the Lord to Jeremiah about the covenant. Listen well to the terms of it, and be the spokesmen of it to all the race of Judah, all the citizens of Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup> This warning then shall give them from the Lord God of Israel: Cursed be the man who will not obey the terms of this covenant, the commandment which I enjoined on your fathers when I rescued them from Egypt's furnace of iron. Give heed to my call, I told them, and do as I bid you; then you shall be my people, and I will be your God. So would I fulfil the promise made on oath to their fathers before them; the promise of a land all milk and honey, that land which is yours to-day.

So be it, Lord, said I; and he bade me cry the message aloud all through the townships of Judah, all through the streets of Jerusalem. Listen to the terms of this covenant, and keep them well: ever since I rescued them from Egypt I have been adjuring those fathers of yours, day in, day out, to listen to me, and listen they would not. No hearing would they give me, but went each his own way, perverse as ever, till at last I must carry out the threat contained in this covenant, still proclaimed and still defied.

Why, the Lord said to me, here is a conspiracy among Judah's folk, Jerusalem's folk! They have gone back to the old guilty ways of their rebellious fathers; they in their turn have hearken themselves to the worship of alien gods; my instrumental covenant with Israel and Judah is void; they have rescinded it! And now, the Lord says, I mean to a visit them with punishment inevitable, punishment inevitable: let us Judah and Jerusalem have recourse, if they will, to the gods they honour with their sacrifices, it will avail them nothing in their distress. No is cowardly of them, Judah, but none have its own deity, no sinner in Jerusalem but there wouldst set up there alone abominable, whose sacrifice is offered to the gods of the countryside!

Now do thou, Jerusalem, think to intercede for this people of mine, or take up in their name the burden of prayer and prayer; when they cry to me in their distress, hearing they shall have none. A people so well beloved, that so haunts my house, yet vexed with cruel War, dost thou think the consecrated flesh will avail in aid thee of thy waning faith? An olive-tree, ready and fair and fruitful, so is it

<sup>1</sup> 'The covenant' this should, presumably, be the reference of the Law under King Josiah (2 K. 23.2). 'Spokesman' implies that the the elders are addressed; the Septuagint Greek gives 'spokesmen.'

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text here is understandable, and extremely courage.

was the Lord loved to think of thee; and now, at the sound of his majestic voice," fire breaks out, and all those sheets are burned away.

11 Yes, it is the Lord of hosts, who once planned thee, that has now decreed the smiting of Israel and Judah, smiting for their own ill-doing, when they sacrificed to the gods of the countryside in defiance of me.

12 Then, Lord, dost make it all known to me your doers, warning me beforehand of their devices. Hitherto, I had been unsuspecting as a quail hawk that is led off to the slaughter-house; I knew nothing of the plots they were hatching against me, as they whispered, Let us give him a taste of the gallows-tree;<sup>1</sup> let us rid the world of him, so that his very name will be forgotten! But thou, Lord of hosts, true judge that never read the innermost thoughts of man's heart, let me live so I see thee punish them; so that I have made my plot known. And now the Lord has a word for yonder men of Anathoth, who conspired to kill me, and would have stopped me prophesying in the Lord's name, on pain of my life. I will call them to account for it, says the

Lord of hosts; by the sword their warriors shall perish, and their sons and daughters by famine. None shall be left, save beside the men of Anathoth, when the year comes for my reckoning with thee.

## CHAPTER 13

1 LORD, I know well that right is on thy side, if I should implore thee, yet concentrate with thee I must; why is it that the allies of the wicked prosper; serve a master double-dyed but all good well with him? Deep secret they make, so finely thou hast planned them, thine and bear fruit; yet all the while their hearts keep thee at a distance, only their lips proclaim thee. Yet it is thy warrant, Lord, I bring with favour thou regard me, but proof of my heart's loyalty; will thou not bind them together like sheep, and mark them down for slaughter? How long must this land go in mourning, all the produce of its fields be parched up, to avenge the ill-doing of its inhabitants? Neither beast nor bird left in it; and still their hope is, I shall not live to see their end come!<sup>2</sup>

2 Where, Lord, wert thou when thy rivals were on foot? And hast thou

<sup>1</sup> 'His majestic voice'; in the Hebrew text, 'a great tempest.'

<sup>2</sup> This is perhaps the best interpretation of the meaning, adopted by the Vulgate and by the Bernean Greek, 'let us put wood into his hand.' The Hebrew text gives, 'Let us deliver the one in its hand'; that is, presumably, 'with its teeth,' but with an implication that no parallel elsewhere.

<sup>3</sup> 'I shall not live to see their end come' is possibly, 'that does not see what because of them.'

the murre to challenge fishermen? Easy to keep the confidence, here on soft ground; what shift with those mure in the firm of Jordan? Even by the own clamours, the own father's kin, then art betrayed; those too will join in the hue and cry after thee; never trust soft words of thine.<sup>1</sup>

Farewell, my home; I have done with my chosen people; the life that was so dear to me I have loaded over to its enemies.<sup>2</sup> My people is grown strange to me, as fire smoldering in its former lair; what marvel if I am weary of it? My people grown strange to me as curlew-bird, its needed plumage all barbed in blood!<sup>3</sup>

Order here, Ocean that roam the earth, urge for your prey. Dooms a many have laid waste my vineyard, trampled down my a lands; the land I loved so, turned into a lonely wilderness! Another is they have made it, and Another it means for me now; a very picture of desolation, and all for the want of men with healing hearts. No is track over the uplands but has seen the footsore coming by; from end to end of the country the sword of divine vengeance runs; peace, leaving no peace for any living thing: where wheat was sown, the harvest shall be of thorns, where men held lands, they shall get no advantage of it; all your harvests shall disappoint you, so ferve the Lord's anger burn.

And the message comes from the Lord to those 11 neighbors of his, that encroach upon the domain he has granted to his people of Judah: I mean to uproot them from their homes, when I uproot the men of Jude from the land that lies between them. Yet I will return as rewards them in their exile and have pity on them; so their scattered homes and countries they shall all return. Then, if they will but learn the traditions of my own people, and take their oaths by the Lord, the living God, so they need might my people to take note by that, their fortunes shall be founded more in the midst of Jude. But wherever or my call goes unheeded, the Lord says, that people's uprooting shall be that people's undoing.

<sup>1</sup> vs. 1, 2. This is apparently the divine answer to the prophet's impatience with the men of Ammonite, what he has experienced as he is working in the desolate country which people him or Jerusalem. The land formerly, the 'fringe' of Jordan was a line of wild houses (vs. 11) it is not clear whether paid from wild houses or paid from those in later villages.

<sup>2</sup> The way in which Jeremiah has been treated by his fellow-exiles resembles the way in which God has been treated as a stranger by his chosen people.

<sup>3</sup> The first half of verse 3 runs literally, 'Has my people become a spotted bird to me, a bird shot all over?' The Hebrew text gives, 'Was my people become a spotted vulture to me?' The (other) vulture would be against it; the Septuagint Greek, 'Is my people a spotted man to me, or a dove found in?' Probably the true meaning is lost.

## CHAPTER 13

- THE Lord's word came to me: Go and buy a girdle of linen, and put  
 1 it about thy loins, never yet soaked in water. Girdle I bought me  
 2 as the Lord had bidden, and wore it; and now the Lord speaks again:  
 3 Is the girdle bought and worn? Up, take it with thee to Euphrates river,  
 4 and hide it there in a cervice of the rock. So I went obediently, and hid  
 5 it away in the Euphrates. Many days afterwards, the Lord sent me on  
 6 my travels again to the Euphrates, to recover the girdle hidden there at  
 7 his command; so thither I went, and ascertained the girdle from its hiding-  
 8 place, to find it all perished and useless. Whereupon the Lord's word  
 9 came to me, and this was his message: Not less the great pride of Jude,  
 10 the great pride of Jerusalem, must perish. Here is a rebellious people  
 11 that will not listen to my call; they must needs take their own false path,  
 12 counting upon gods and submitting to their worship. No better, then,  
 13 than ponder useless girdles; close as a man's girdle lies about his loins I  
 14 had bound Israel and Jude to myself; my people they were to be, my  
 15 reason and pride and glory; but no, they would not listen.  
 16 Tell them this, too, from the Lord God of Israel: Sapeons are for  
 17 wine. And when they answer, it is no wine to them that sapeons are  
 18 for wine, give them this message from the Lord: Ay, but the people  
 19 of this land, King of David's line sitting on David's throne, priests and  
 20 prophets and citizens of Jerusalem every one, are sapeons waiting to be  
 21 killed. I mean to burn them, as with wine, and then charnel<sup>1</sup> them;  
 22 brother torn away from brother, and fathers from their children; ruth  
 23 and mercy none shall have, not be spared in the common ruin.  
 24 Hear and heed and humble yourselves; it is the Lord who speaks.  
 25 Give God his due, ere the shadows fall, and your day begins to wamble  
 26 as the dark moonless ways. For day you shall long, but he will have  
 27 turned it into night; dark as death the lowering of the stars. Yes,  
 28 if you will not listen now, give me leave to hide myself away and bemoan  
 29 your proud hearts; weep I must and wail, and my eyes run down with  
 30 tears, if the Lord's dock is doomed to captivity.  
 31 To king<sup>2</sup> and queen-mother say this, Come down and take your

<sup>1</sup> vs. 1-11. According to the opinion of St Jerome, the events here described happened only in a vision.

<sup>2</sup> The Latin text has under the name of "heaven," but this here the King of the people.

<sup>3</sup> There can be no certainty what king is alluded to; if it was Josiah or Jeconiah, the "king of the north" may perhaps be the leader-chiefs of Egypt (cf. IV Reg. 24-25).

places with the rest, discredited of your royalty. Shut off are the  
 dikes of the south, empty is name; dispeopled lies Judah, of all her sons  
 dispeopled. Now-come from the north country, look about you  
 and tell . . .<sup>1</sup>

. . . Ah, Jerusalem, what has become of the flock once entrusted to  
 thee, thy homestead care? What wilt thou say when thou art called  
 to give account of it? Thy enemies are such as thou hast taught how  
 to attack thee; thy schooling has recoiled on thy own head; sharper  
 than travel-dances the assaults that shall overcome thee. And wilt  
 thou find room for surprise, why this should have befallen thee? Doubt  
 not it is thy own wrong-doing that has stripped thee naked, and plunged  
 thee deep in debasement. Sooner may Ethiopia turn white, leopard's hide to  
 unmarked, than Judah withdraw the bones of ill-doing and amend. Far  
 and wide I will scatter thy sons, like stars caught in the desert wind;  
 such is the furnace met thee, such thy retribution exactly awarded, as  
 because thou hast forgotten me, and in lying fables put thy trust.  
 That is why I will pull thy skirts about thy ears and manifest thy shame; a  
 scutcheon of thine, and lasciviousness, and all the galle of thy debauchery, or  
 the foul deeds I have seen done on hill-tops, in the open countryside.  
 Fie on thee, Jerusalem, that wilt not come back to me and be cleansed!  
 Shall it last for ever?

## CHAPTER 14

**H**OW the Lord answered Jeremiah in the matter of the drought.  
 Lamentation in Judah, faint hearts and the dream of manna  
 in the market-place, lead the cry that goes up from Jerusalem! Manna  
 made man to live once, but when chosen is reached, water is none;  
 back go the people angry, and disappointed wailing with its head.  
 Vengeance, too, and rolled heads among the country folk, as language  
 the fields for lack of rain. Kind livestock its new-born young, because  
 grass has failed it, and the wild ass on the hill-side gnaws for sin, croc-  
 odis-fashion,<sup>2</sup> open dies with the vain search for pasture. What though  
 we have guilt to plead against us? For thy own honour, Lord, bring  
 us aid, rebuke us often, yet confounding how we have wronged thee! Then,  
 Israel's hope, in time of calamity its refuge still, wilt thou pass us

<sup>1</sup> In the Latin version, the now-come from the north are addressed; the Hebrew text, which is evidently faulty, gives, 'Lift thou your eyes, and see thou the men coming from the north.' The connection between the two halves of the verse is in any case obscure, and there may have been an omission. The word 'Jerusalem' is not expressed in the original until verse 17.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'as the dragons do.' Some would interpret, 'as the hounds do.'

ly, like stranger in a land that is none of his, like some traveller that  
 1 will ask for a night's lodging and be gone? Why dost thou hang back  
 like a man irresolute, a warrior that has forgotten his strength? Lord,  
 thy dwelling-place is among us; thy holy name we bear, wilt thou  
 abandon us?

12 Haste even is love with wandering, never at rest, what answer  
 will the Lord make them? That his favour is not for them, at this hour  
 he keeps their guilt in memory, for all their misdoings calls them to  
 account. Nay, the Lord said to me, do not grieve for the welfare of  
 such a people as this. For they, their prayers shall go unheard, offer  
 they burnt-offerings and victims, I will have none of it; sword, and  
 13 famine, and the pestilence shall wear them down. Alas, alas, Lord  
 God, said I, how are thy prophets telling them they shall never see  
 sword drawn, famine shall be none among them; theirs shall be a  
 14 land of living content. These are but false promises, the Lord said,  
 that they utter in my name; woe bet they never had them, no, not  
 around, nor message; of false visions they tell you, and soothsayings,  
 15 and trickery, and their own hearts' inventions. Here is the Lord's  
 sentence upon prophets not of his sending, who speak to you in his  
 name of a land unknown by sword or famine, by sword and famine these  
 16 prophets shall be devoured. Slain by sword and famine, the common  
 folk that listen to them shall lie in the streets of Jerusalem, with none  
 to bury them; wives and sons and daughters shall die with them; their  
 own misdoings shall be a flood to drown them.

17 This too thou shalt say to them . . .

18 . . . Weep, eyes, day and night, never resting, at the great heart, for  
 a grievous wound she suffers, my people, inviolable till now! Nothing  
 the countryside shows but massacre, nothing the dry but faces plucked  
 with drought; prophets and priest are gone, in a land of strangers they  
 19 must ply their trade! Now. Hast thou abandoned Jude once for all,  
 art thou weary of Zion? For all healing thou hast wounded us; how  
 we long for better times, and no relief comes to us, for remedy at last,  
 20 and danger still threatens! Lord, we acknowledge our rebelliousness,  
 acknowledge our fathers' guilt, confess that we have wronged thee,  
 21 for thy own honour, do not shame us, do not ding thy own royal glory  
 in thee! Grant rain, they crave, the false gods of the heathen, the dumb

<sup>1</sup> It does not seem likely that the oracle 'This too thou shalt say to them' applies to the very famous announcements which follow as oracles or a disclosure in the end is more probable.

<sup>2</sup> This is definitely implied by the verb used in the Hebrew text; the Latin version has obscured its significance.

skins have no thorns of their own to give; for these, My creatures, wait we patiently on the Lord our God.

## CHAPTER 14

**B**UT it was thus the Lord answered me: Through Moses himself<sup>1</sup> and Samuel made intercession for them, neither love nor liking would I have for this people of mine; banish them from my presence, to go where they will. If they ask whither, give them this message from the Lord: Whom the plagues becometh, to the plagues; whom the sword, to the sword; whom famine, to famine; whom exile, to exile. Eaten they shall have of four kinds, the Lord says; the sword to slay and the dogs to tear them, birds in air and beasts on earth to devour and make an end of them. All the kingdoms of the world shall be in a shiver<sup>2</sup> over them; so will I punish the all doers down in Jerusalem by Mucannan, son of Eucias, whom he was king of Jude. Nay, Jeremia, who shall pity or become clean, who shall turn aside, as he passes, to wish them well? Thus hath Jerusalem sin, the Lord says, and wouldst<sup>3</sup> journey with me no more; now my hand is raised to smite, and make an end of thee; I am weary of weeding thee. Over the threshhold of the land I blow my people away like chaff, scattered, diminished, and unrepentant still. Widows there be, countless as the sea-sand; where is now the warrior now? In broad daylight I send the evening quails to strike terror into their cities. Sick at heart and faint she lies, that even now had borne; her moon is night, her hopes and her joys gone; and all that she has left, the Lord says, shall fall a prey to the reward in battle.

As if thy wrath, my own maker, didst bring me into the world! A world where all for me is strife, all is hostility, neither creditor I nor debtor to any man, yet they curse my name!

But the Lord answered, I promise that thou shalt leave behind thee a good service done, and that in all distress and persecution I am coming to thy side, to save thee from the enemies. What, should iron and a bow be in league with the iron that comes from the north?

... (All the riches and treasures of thy land shall be disposed, to punishment for all its guilt, and to no purpose; I am recompensing it

<sup>1</sup> According to the Hebrew text, "in conversation."

<sup>2</sup> *as. sh. sh.* The sense of these two verses is doubtful, and the Latin does not agree well with the Hebrew text in some places. Verse 12 perhaps implies that Jerusalem was accused of being hard to give unto the invaders (25:17) just as the "pillar of iron," the "wall of bronze" (22:9) be its danger with the iron pole (24:14) of Babylon!

crimes to attack thee from a land far away; it is your own persons that shall be burnt up in the fires of vengeance (my anger has kindled)? . . .

- 11 These are my witnesses, Lord; behold thee, and stand in my defence against my persecutors; hold thy hand no longer, but claim me for thy own;<sup>1</sup> if I have sinned as thou sayest, it was in thy cause. When thy words were heard,<sup>2</sup> how goodly I descended (thou Great Joy and comfort thou) words gave in my heart, heart of a prophet thou bearst my name. Not for me the company of the merry-makers, I would not share in their banquets; under the threat of thy judgement I sit alone, filled with brooding thoughts. Why are thou and thoughts laid with me? Is my heart desperate, beyond all remedy? Did it cheat me, like water empty water-courses, my hope in thee?
- 12 There<sup>3</sup> said to me, the Lord said, and I will draw thee to myself, as water upon me. When thou hast learned to separate words from deeds, thou shalt be my true spokesman, and thou shalt draw others to thyself, not let thyself be drawn to them. This people of mine shall find thee a stout wall of brass, impenetrable to their attack; and I will be at thy side, the Lord says, to protect and deliver thee.<sup>4</sup> Let the wicked be never so powerful, I will engage for thy safety.

## CHAPTER 16

- 1 THE Lord's word came to me: With such a land for thy dwelling-place, neither wire nor grader; for sons and daughters born in this land, for mothers who have given them birth and fathers who began them, the Lord has all sons to lose. Die they of the plague, they shall lie like dung on the ground, swept, unburied, meet they their end by sword or famine, birds in air and beasts that roam the earth shall prey on the carcases of them. When they hold wake for the dead, such is the Lord's bidding, never enter thou, models and

<sup>1</sup> *ms.* 17. 14. These forms are repeated, in part, lower down (27. 1); they hardly seem to be in place here. The words 'to no purpose' perhaps refer to the rebuffs meted by Egypt (IV Reg. 46-47), which left the state of Jude with no chance of buying off the Chaldeans.

<sup>2</sup> This is the first that can be made of the obscure (and perhaps corrupt) phrase. Do not take me in thy hesitating.

<sup>3</sup> "When thy words were heard", this is usually taken as referring to prophetic inspiration; but no parallel is adduced for such a forced way of talking. It may be suggested that Jeremiah is here referring to his feelings when the Book of the Law was rediscovered under King Josiah. The Septuagint Greek reads 'When thou who hastest thy words' (connected with verse 15).

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'were,' throughout this verse.



emulate them never; friendship of mine this people shall never have, nor grain, nor wine, the Lord says. The sick, the poor in that country of theirs, burial and wine they shall have none; never a flask gashed in a head shaved to honour them; none shall break bread with the nearest, nor give him a draught of wine for his comfort, through father or mother he bewail. Nor ever there where men feast, to sit at meat and drink with them: this dooms he warns, the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: You shall live to see the day when cries of joy and mirth, voice of holiness and of praise, in this land are heard no more.

This warning uttered, if they ask that why the divine sentence is so stern, wherein their guilt lies, what wrong they have done to the Lord their God, tell them this is his name: It is because your fathers have forsaken me, had recourse to alien gods, and substituted to the worship of them, my dishes instead, my laws defiled. And you have cut to close your fathers in malice, each of you following the ill bent of his own heart, and disobeying me. Unlike far from home, in a land neither a you nor those fathers of yours ever saw, you shall spend day and night in the service of alien gods, without respite. (Ag, the Lord says, a time is coming when the living Lord once meant by will no longer be the God who rescued Israel from Egypt; the living God will be one who has rescued Israel from the north country, and all the places of exile that are now designed for you, restoring them to the home which was once his gift to their fathers.<sup>1</sup>) Many deliverance I have, the Lord says, to spread the net for them; and after that many successes, to bring them down among mountains and hill-sides and rocky caverns. Good watch I keep on their doings, never lose sight of them; no guilt of theirs can escape my scrutiny. Twice over they shall pay for guilt of theirs, a mistaking of theirs, the men that have polluted my own land with dead idols, spread pollution through all my domains.

Strength and stronghold, Lord, refuge in time of peril, shall not to the Gentiles themselves come to due from the ends of the earth, considering that all their perishing is but a heritage of lies, that their idols cannot avail them: shall men make gods for themselves, that gods in truth are none?

Ag, it is the very lesson I come to teach them now; that I act, and act with power; they shall learn to know the name of Lord at last.

<sup>1</sup> Jer. 31. 31. These verses are repeated later in Jer. 7. 13, and some think they have been wrongly inserted here by accident.

CHAPTER 17

NOT more idolatrous man, the guilt of heath, if pen of steel or point of  
 1 dissolved had given it with their hearts for tables, or upon the  
 2 rim of their altars; idolatrous, while there are eyes of their consciences  
 where altar stood once and sacred trees, stones in the thick ferns, shrines  
 3 on the high hills: to offer sacrifice even yet in the open countryside. All  
 the riches and treasures of thy land shall be destroyed, all its hill-shrines;<sup>1</sup>  
 4 its purchase-money for all its guilt. Lost to thee, the house that once I gave  
 thee; in a land thou knowest not thou shalt be the slave of thy enemies;  
 the fire of anger thou hast kindled in me can never be quenched.  
 5 Cursed shall he be, the Lord says, that puts his trust in man, and  
 6 will have flesh and blood to aid him, his thoughts far from God. Never  
 shall the sight of better things greet him; he shall as some hawk of unwar-  
 7 mitted out in the desert, he dwells in a garden waste, the salt plains  
 8 for all his company. Blessed shall he be that puts his trust in the Lord,  
 9 makes the Lord his refuge. Not more favoured is man placed by the  
 water's edge, that pushes out its roots to catch the moisture, and defies  
 the summer heat; its green leaves cumber it the drought, its fruit  
 rotting.  
 10 There is no riddle like the twist of the heart; who shall master  
 11 them? Who but I, the Lord, that can see into man's heart, and read  
 his innermost thoughts, to every life awarding what its doings have earned?  
 12 Perilous that dothens a heart out its own is its wisdom for the man  
 that wins riches unjustly, when life is but half done, he must take leave  
 of them, a fool to the last.  
 13 Wherefrom the first supreme majesty did uttermost, those like our  
 14 sanctuary; those, Lord, art Israel's hopes, the men who think thee  
 will be disappointed, the men who strive from thy paths will be stern-  
 15 witten in sand; have they not forgotten that Lord who is the fountain  
 16 of living water? If I am to be hated, it is thou, Lord, must lead me;  
 if I am to find deliverance, it is thou must deliver me; thou art all my  
 17 hope. What has become of the Lord's threat? (he must come now),  
 18 we are waiting to see it accomplished. But this was no hasty word  
 of mine, I did but lead where thou leddest; it was no wish of mine that

<sup>1</sup> The mention of the hill-shrines here is probably due to a false reading; cf. 17:13.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'the heart of all men is perverse and unsearchable; who shall have knowledge of it?' The Hebrew text gives, 'the heart of man is perverse and discometh above all things; who shall have knowledge of it?'

calamity should befall mankind;¹ so would I cursed but had the warning of thy warning. Not for me thy terror; the day of affliction is coming, yet I shall find refuge in thee. They must be ashamed, and I vindicated, as they must weep, while I stand confident. It is on them the day of affliction will fall, toward thee, then, with avenged heart for the harm they did.

The Lord bids me go and take my stand at the People's Gate, where the kings of Judah passed in and out; and there, in turn, as the other gates of Jerusalem. This was to be my message from the Lord to the king and people of Judah, to every citizen of Jerusalem that used those gates: No more, on pain of your lives, shoulder those packs of yours, and carry them through Jerusalem gates on the sabbath day. Never is a load near leave your houses, nor any work to be done, on the sabbath; this was the command I gave to your fathers, only they would not listen or pay heed, dashed under the yoke of discipline and refused to obey me. And you, the Lord says, will you obey? Bid these people, ways of their sabbath broken, keep the sabbath holy by seeing from work, and your kings and princes, David's own heirs, shall will go as riding through them, with horses and chariots, with their retinue of nobles, with the men of Judah and Jerusalem's citizens in their train. Moreover your city shall be populous; from the townships of Judah, and from your own countryside, from Benjamin, from plain and hill and the waste lands of the north, men shall come with burnt-offering and victims and bloodless offering and incense to enrich the Lord's temple. Refuse to keep the sabbath holy, profane it with burdens and toils and burdens obtained through the gate, and I will set them: gates in a bloc that shall burn down all Jerusalem are you can quench it.

## CHAPTER 18

THE Lord's word came to Jeremiah, bidding him smite himself to the potter's house; there a divine message awaited him. So I went to the potter's house, and found him working at his wheel; but then, the thing of clay he was fashioning broke in his hands, and he, as the wheel took him, turned it now another thing of clay. Then it was the Lord's word came to me: You are in my hands, men of Israel, as the clay is the potter's; why may I not do as the potter did? All at once to a nation born, a kingdom there, I pronounce my sentence, for the uprising and making of it, for its utter destruction. Let

¹ The word "mankind" is not in the Hebrew text; its presence in the Latin seems due to a false interpretation.

but that nation repent of the crimes I brought against it, I too will repent of the punishment I thought to visit. All at once to a nation here, a kingdom there, I promise restoration of its fortunes and new life. Let but that nation do my will, that let men to my liking, I too will repent of all the fair promises I made it.

10 Be this, then, thy message from the Lord to Judah's folk, to the citizens of Jerusalem: In days I have in store for you, all my plans are laid: none that each one of you should remove from the face of earth, a shape alone and thoughts new. Ah no, they tell me, too fast hath one clung to his own course, follows his own bent way. Search the world over, the Lord says, where were ever such deeds heard of as this deed here! What would, has most surely done? What, that the waters of Lebanon mark from these wild peaks? Shall they be dried up at their source, these big rivers that flow down from it? Not less strange that this people of mine should forget me, and cease to make sacrifices; that they should hate their own peaks too rough for them, the tracks marked out so long ago, and journey on instead along by-paths untried. Desolate their country shall be, doomed to everlasting scorn: every passer-by will shudder at it, as men his head in dishonour. I will sweep them away before the enemy's onset, as the east wind sweeps all before it; turn my back and never look their way in the hour of need.

11 Moreover they summoned a council to plot against me, Jeremiah: What, they said, would be here as before we need no more points to expand the law, no more wise men to counsel us, no more prophets to say their word? They thought to compass my death by their whisperings; to all my warnings would pay heed no longer. Lord, give me an audience, listen to these pratings of my enemies. Must they make such a return for my good will, laying a snare to rob my life? Behold then, how I ever stood up before them to plead for them, to avert thy anger from them. Hereforth leave their children so fearful, or give them up to bondage; may their wives be childless widows, their grown men die of pestilence, their young men by the sword-thrust in battle; let their houses ring with lamentation, a cry to the sudden outbreak of sorrow! Cunning the ways they laid, deep the pit they dug to ensnare me: but there is no hiding from thee, Lord, the designs they have on my life. Do not forgive their malice, keep their guilt ever in thy sight: cast them down to earth at thy presence, and in thy anger make an end of them.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'before the rock of the field.' The text may be corrupt, and perhaps conceal a proper name.

## CHAPTER 19

UP, the Lord said to me, and get thee a jar of earthenware, take it to the valley of Ben-Hamon, close to the Earthenware Gate, with elders of the people and some of the older priests for thy company; there prophesy as I bid thee. To the dynasty of Juda, to all the children of Jerusalem, give this message from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: I mean to bring such calamity on this place, as shall ring in the ears of all that hear it. The place that ever was mine, now alienated by the rebels that dwell there; to alien gods they ever knew, no fathers of theirs, no kings of Juda ever knew, they have done mischief in this place, smothering it with the blood of the innocent. Here the gods of the country-side must have their till-sheaves, and children must be burnt as a sacrifice to their honour; a sin not of my patterning, or rejoicing, or imagining. And now, the Lord says, a time is coming when it will no more be called Topheth, or the Valley of Ben-Hamon; it will be called the Valley of the Slain. In this valley all the hopes of Juda and Jerusalem shall be poured away, at the sword's point they shall meet their enemy and fall into pitiless hands, and I will give leave to bid in air, leave on earth, to prey on the carcases of them. A thing of honour and scorn this city shall be; no passer-by but will shudder at it, no kin distant at the memory of its sufferings. Nay, a pitiless enemy shall press the siege so hard, that I will leave them no food save the flesh of men and daughters; man shall eat man.

Then break that be of thine, for all thy company to me, and give forth to this message from the Lord of hosts: Broken to pieces you shall be, as iron and clay, like yonder thing of clay that is past all repairing; men will be finding bones for their dead in Topheth, because yonder burying-ground is none. Such, the Lord says, is the doom I have pronounced on city and on crown; Jerusalem itself shall be a Topheth, all the houses in it, and yonder palace where the kings of Juda reigned, as Topheth sacred; it was there, on the red-oxen, they sacrificed to all the host of heaven, and made offering to alien gods.

His errand at Topheth done, Jeremiah took his stand in the temple courts, and gave the people this message from the Lord God of Israel: All ye there shewers against Jerusalem and her daughter cities I mean to perform the punishment of a pole refused, a oak uprooted.

## CHAPTER 20

WHEN Jeremiah uttered this prophecy, one of those who heard him was Pashur, son of Immer, a priest who was entrusted with the care of the temple. This Pashur gave Jeremiah a beating, and put him in the stocks at the upper gate of Benjamin, in the temple precincts, but next day released him. A new sign the Lord has for thee, Jeremiah told him, instead of Pashur, he means to call thee Danger-Everywhere. Danger enough thou shalt have, the Lord says, thou and those friends of thine; with thy own eyes thou shalt see the enemy put them to the sword, when I make the king of Babylon master of Jude; in Babylon he will take them, and put them to the sword there. All the wealth of this city, all the fruits of its soil, all that is of price, all the treasury of Judah's kings, those enemies shall have in their power, to plunder and carry off and take back to Babylon with them. And thou, Pashur, with all thy household, shalt go into exile to Babylon thou shalt go, in Babylon thou shalt die, and there find burial with all such friends of thine as listened to thy lying prophecy.

- 1 Lord, thou hast sent me on a fool's errand; if I played a fool's part, a strength greater than mine overmastered me; morn to night, what a laughing-stock am I, every man's cry-word! Long have I prophesied, and still I stammered against men's wickedness, and still cried ruin; day in, day out, nothing it saved me, this divine spokesman'ship, but reproach and mockery. Did I think to put the Lord out of my thoughts, and speak no more in his name, all at once it seemed as though a raging fire were locked up in my bosom, till I was worn out with it, and could bear no more. For me, danger everywhere; so many crying, Denounce him, and that cry echoed by all the companions I trusted, as they kept close watch on me: Denounce him, we will, he may be fooled yet! Then we can overmaster him, and take our vengeance! But the Lord stood at my side, a strong champion; fell and fell they must, and be disappointed of their hopes; fools, that cannot foresee these things, shame! foolish, venturing their lives! But thou, Lord of hosts, true Judge that must read the truest thoughts of man's heart, let me live to see these foolish things to that I have made my plea known.<sup>1</sup> Sing to the Lord yet, praise the Lord yet; he does not leave a defenceless life at the mercy of the wicked.
- 6 Cursed be the day of my birth! A curse for coming it was, not for blessing, when my mother brought me into the world. Cursed be the man who told my father a son had been born to him, and brought gladness, ay,

<sup>1</sup> A repetition of verse eleven.

giveness, into his heart: For that good news, he be rewarded with the  
 noise of hands-cries at noon, sings at noon, like some city the Lord over-  
 throws in super unrelenting! Why did he not slay me you unknown, the  
 words for my mouth, and frustrate my mother's hope eternally? Why is  
 now I come out into the light of day, where only labor and sorrow greet  
 me, and in disappointed striving all my life is spent?

## CHAPTER 21

AND this was the answer Jeremiah had from the Lord, when king  
 Sedecias sent two eunuchs to consult him; their names were Phasur  
 son of Malchias, and Sephanias son of Maasia, a priest. The king sought  
 a divine oracle about the war then levied on him by Nabuchodonosor,  
 king of Babylon; would the Lord grant his people wondrous deliverance  
 as of old? Would the siege be raised? And Jeremiah was taken back to the  
 royal presence, with this message from the Lord, the God of Israel: All  
 the strength you have put into the field,<sup>1</sup> to meet the king of Babylon and  
 your Chaldean besiegers at a distance from the walls, I mean to force  
 back into the city and clog it up within. Then my arm shall be raised to  
 strike, then my power shall be stirred, but against you; I will be all anger,  
 all indignation, all resentment, making the inhabitants of this city with  
 a great pestilence that shall slay both man and beast. But yet king  
 Sedecias he shall be left alive, and some of his courtiers and his retainers,  
 some of the elders will be left alive, plague and war and famine accompan-  
 ying. And these shall fall into the hands of Nabuchodonosor, king of  
 Babylon, into the hands of a pitiless enemy, that will put them to the  
 sword without ransom, or staff, or reprieve.

And this warning the Lord gives to the common folk: Here is choice I  
 offer you between life and death, take which course you will. To remain  
 in this city means death by sword, famine, or pestilence; leave it, and go  
 over to the invading army of Chaldeans, and you shall be spared; you  
 shall have your lives for goodness. For we, not you, I keep this city over  
 in regard; the king of Babylon shall be master of it, and burn it to the  
 ground.

And for king and princes of Judah: Men of David's line, here is a warn-  
 ing from the Lord for your hearing. Learn before to make traitors, and  
 not the opponents of his prey, as my vengeance will bear out against  
 you, like fire that still burns and will not be quenched.

Now turn I to thee, the Lord says, proud city that hast thy dwellings  
 place in the valley, between rock and plain. Hear ye, ye townspeople,

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'all the weapons you have in your hands.'

- 12 that no you no stroke shall fall, none shall reach your hand? You shall be called to account, the Lord says, as your ill-doings have deserved; in this fire<sup>1</sup> I will light such a fire as shall consume all around it.<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER 22

- 1 **A** MESSAGE from the Lord, I must bring myself to the royal palace, and make proclamation there: Listen to a divine warning, king of Judah though thou be, and hearken to David's throne; it is for thee and thy courtiers and thy retinue, all that claim entry here. Just sentence, the Lord says, and right award; not the oppressor of his prey; to slay, to slay and widow do neither despite nor wrong; never, within these walls, be innocents condemned to death. This warning if you obey, through these palace gates the heirs of David and of David's throne, with humble and charitable, courteous and serene, shall yet pass in and fro. Disobey, the Lord says, and my own house is engaged to ruin, of this palace, a ruin.  
2 On the royal tower of Judah this is the Lord's sentence: Growth I found here once, vigorous as in Galad as an Lebanon's height; now I have sworn to make a desert of it, no place for the houses of men.<sup>3</sup> Who shall smite the blow, and with what arm, is doomed surely; all these fair orders shall be cut down, and cast into the fire.  
3 Nations a many shall pass by these ruins; and when a man asks his neighbour what it means, that the Lord should deal so hardly with a great city like this, the answer will be, it was because they despised the command of the Lord their God, and worshipped alien gods, took alien gods for their masters.  
4 Not for the dead you mourn, not for him bow your heads; if weep you must, weep for him that must go and come again as now, never again on the land of his birth. Suffer<sup>4</sup> that followed his father Josiah on the throne of Judah, is leaving Jerusalem, the Lord says, and will never come back to it: the land now is that country to which I have banished him, and see this land no more.  
5 Alas, for the palace that is built with gain<sup>5</sup> it grows, for walls founded

<sup>1</sup> *vs. 12, 14.* These verses are generally understood as referring to Jerusalem. But the geographical description given hardly seems applicable, and it is better to admit that the declaration to which this particular prophecy was addressed remains unknown.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'For the Lord says this about the house of the king of Judah: Galad shall be to me, the summit of Lebanon; I swear to make them a desert, uninhabitable places.'

<sup>3</sup> *Solomon* (also mentioned in 1 *Sam.* 2:12) is usually identified with *Jeroboam* (*IV*, pp. 41-42).



only as wrong! Alas for the man that sets his fellow men vainly devising,  
and leaves his wages unpaid! A fine house I will make of it, says he, and a  
wide room in it. Here he will shave out a window, there he will panel  
a wall with cedar, and paint it vermilion. Am then hoping for a long reign, is  
that thou shouldst challenge comparison with the cedars? Thy father was  
one that ate and drank at his ease, gave every man his just due, and was  
content: well for him that he gave the blindless and the poor suckers, as  
as men will when they bethink themselves of me. Thou hast no eyes, no  
thoughts, but for going for innocent men's undoing, for oppression, for  
the reckless pursuit of mischief. This, then, is the Lord's sentence upon us  
Jeckin, son to Josiah and king of Judah. For him no cry shall be made,  
Brother, what grief? Son, what grief? For him no cry shall be made,  
Ah, what a sorrow! Ah, what sorrow! As one's burial he shall have, cast  
out, a stinking corpse, beyond the gates of Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup>

Get thee gone, faithless people, to Lebanon, and cry out there; Sit is  
Ramen with thy voice, and let Ashurim<sup>2</sup> echo the cry again; ruin has over-  
taken all these lovers of thine. In the days of thy ease, I gave thee warn-  
ing, but thou wouldst not listen; it was ever thus from thy girlhood's days,  
my voice went unheeded. Drifting with the wind, the drosser thou once  
didst follow, captive all those that once held thy knee! Be ashamed at last,  
and blush for all thy wickedness. High on Lebanon thy dwelling-place, as  
high in the cedars that nest of thine, pines shall be thy mean when puns  
overtake thee, like the puns of a woman in travail.

And of Jeckin's son Jechebuz, that is heir to the throne of Judah, the  
Lord says this: Were he the signet ring on my right hand, I would cast  
him off from the east. Thou hast sworn exiles to thee, Nabuchodonosor<sup>3</sup> is  
king of Babylon, and his Chaldeans, shall have the mastery of thee. Cast  
is away, thyself and the queen-mother who bore thee, into an alien land,  
far from the land of your birth, to die there, ever longing for home, and  
never obtaining rest. What, is he but a broken piece of earthenware, as

<sup>1</sup> The first half of this verse is generally interpreted as saying: Thus Jeckin  
think that competitiveness in the matter of cedar paneling will make more  
of a king of him? The translation given above, which follows the Latin, perhaps  
demands less of the imagination. 'Am not drunk at his ease?' i.e., with things  
as they were, instead of wrapping himself with quackery schemes of God, man  
and puns.

<sup>2</sup> The use of the word 'sons' would suggest that the mentioned are repre-  
sented as consulting with one another upon their common lot; the verse being  
'Alas, to my sons,' not 'Alas for my sons' (the common interpretation).

<sup>3</sup> See note on IV Reg. 22, 5.

<sup>4</sup> For 'Whence' the Latin version has 'the Phoenician,' translating the word  
instead of transliterating it. 'Lover' is understood by some to mean the king  
of Judah, others would understand it of foreign monarchs, like Egypt, with which  
Judah had formed marriage alliances.

this Judahite, a useless shard, that he should be thrown away, and his  
 20 eyes with him, cast out into a land unknown? Alas, my country, alas,  
 25 alas, my country, better hearing the Lord's words than: Write him down a  
 barren waste, a life gone to waste; child of his men shall never mount  
 David's throne, or govern this realm of Jude.

## CHAPTER 23

1 **O**UT upon them, the Lord says, the shepherds who misuse and dis-  
 2 perse my flock, sheep of my own pasturing! This is the Lord's word  
 3 to the shepherds that guide his people: You are the men who have dis-  
 4 persed my flock, driven it to and fro, and made an account of it; account  
 5 you must give to me, the Lord says, for all you have done under. Then  
 6 will I recompense all that is left of my flock, scattered over so many lands,  
 7 and restore them to their old pasture-ground, to increase and grow  
 8 numerous there; shepherds I mean to give them that will do shepherd's  
 9 work; thus and thus shall be wont to drive them, and none shall be  
 10 missing from their full count, the Lord says. Nay, a time is coming, the  
 11 Lord says, when I will raise up, from the stock of David, a faithful son  
 12 at last. The land shall have a king to reign over it, and reign over it  
 13 wisely, giving just sentence and due award. When that time comes, Jude  
 14 shall find deliverance, none shall disturb Israel's rest; and the name given  
 15 to this king shall be, The Lord vindicates us. In those days to come, says  
 16 the divine message, the living Lord now aware by will no longer be the  
 17 God who rescued Israel from Egypt; the living God will be one who  
 18 rescued Israel and brought them home from the north country, and from  
 19 all the places of exile he had once designed for them, to live in their own  
 20 land again.<sup>1</sup>

21 A message to the prophets: Crushed is the heart in me, and my whole  
 22 being trembles; my thoughts whirl like a drunken man's, harassed by a  
 23 divine presence, by awe of a divine voice. The whole land is a nest of  
 24 adulterers; their path is it that widens the countryside, pastures the up-  
 25 land meadows; practices their pursuit of mischief, through the power they  
 26 wield all gone awry. Prophet and priest alike are impious; in my own  
 27 house, the Lord says, these ill deluges of theirs are plain to view. Pre-  
 28 sumptuously they shall die as one that walks by night in slippery places; false-  
 29 hood and fall they meet; punishment awaits them, the Lord says, my an-  
 30 gels are at hand. For the prophets of Samaria how was it I lost all living?<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Jer. 23, 8. See 28.14, 15.

<sup>2</sup>'I lost all living'; the Lxx here probably means not 'I found foolishness,' but 'I found insipidity,' which is an exact rendering of the Hebrew.

Because they were the spokesmen of Baal, and did but lead Israel astray, that was my people. And now the same foul adultery I find in the prophets of Jerusalem, the same treacherous dealings; and the sinners is encouraged to go on in his evil ways, till city and citizens, for me, are cut with Scythian and Gomeribite. A warning to you then, prophets, from the Lord God of Israel, that he will give you wormwood to eat, gall to drink; yea, the fountain-head of that pollution which overflows all the land.

Do not listen, says the Lord of hosts, to the prophets who prophesy only to feed your fancy of their, not need of mine, inspires the translation. To my blasphemers they bring divine assurance that all shall go well with them; never a man so set on his own sides since but they will tell him, Harm shall never touch them. Never a one of them prisy to the Lord's designs, never one looked and heeded, listened and heard his message.

Like a whirlwind it will suddenly appear, the Lord's vengeance; will be break in storm over rebel heads. Nor shall the divine anger be appeased till the blow has been struck and the decree executed; what his design was, you shall know all too well, all too late.<sup>1</sup>

As errand these prophets run, but none of mine; a message they give, is but not of my sending. Prisy to my designs had they been, ah, then they should have uttered my own warnings, and so I might have turned my people aside from false paths, and evil thought! God am I, the Lord is says, only when I stand near, and not when I am far away? Where, he is would know, will you hide so close that he is not watching you, he, the Lord, that fills heaven and earth? No word, he says, but reaches my ear as when one of these prophets gives false guidance in my name; I had a dream, he will tell you, I had a dream! Will they never have had enough of their lying divinations, their dozing fantasies? Dreams handed from mouth to mouth, for those would they have my people bring away the memory of me; as their fathers did for Baal? Nay, let the dreamer be sent to tell his dreams, and the prophet to whom my word comes utter my word faithfully; staff and gale must not be mingled. My word is a fire, the Lord says, a hammer to break rocks in pieces; out upon the prophets, I say, who pervert divine utterances they have borrowed from their fellow men;<sup>2</sup> out upon the prophets, I say, who let their tongues wag and then cry, Quacks. Out upon the prophets, I say, who dream all in words and repeat their dreams, leading my people away with their lies and their uncertainties; yet errand or warrant they had none from me, the Lord says, nor yet to this people of mine bring any advantage.

<sup>1</sup> *vs. 19, 22.* See *vs. 19, 24*, where the same words are repeated; some think they have been included by error in the present context.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'lead my words such men from his neighbour's' but the context (*cf. verse 22 above*) makes it clear that there is no allusion to possible messages from Almighty God.

12 And if people, or prophet, or priest, should *greet* thee with the ques-  
 tion, *What hasten?* is the Lord taking up so-day? thy answer shall  
 be, You are the burden I bear, the Lord says, and I mean to cast you  
 from my shoulders. Prophet, priest or people *cheers* thee with words about  
 the Lord's burden does it at his own peril, and the peril of all his house-  
 hold: be content to ask friend or neighbour, What o'clock, what message  
 has the Lord given? Do not speak my word of his burden. If you do, you  
 lay a heavy charge upon yourselves, by burdening words with the living  
 God, the Lord of Israel, the God of Israel. Ask the prophet what the  
 Lord's message, what the Lord's message is, if you ask after the Lord's  
 burden, this warning I give you from him: For your disobedience to the  
 message I sent, commanding you to use the word *Burden* no longer, I  
 will make a burden of you, and carry you away, and leave you abandoned,  
 you and your city, my gift to you and to your fathers. You shall be a  
 laughing-stock for ever, a by-word eternally; these shall never efface the  
 memory of your shame.

## CHAPTER 24

AFTER king Nebuchadnezzar, of Babylon, had carried off the king of  
 Judah, Jehoiachin the son of Josiah, and taken him away to Babylon  
 with all his nobles, and all the carpenters and smiths in Jerusalem, the  
 Lord showed me a vision. I saw two baskets of figs, set down at the gate  
 of the Lord's temple. The figs in one basket were of excellent nature,  
 like those which first ripen in the other, most good, so good there was no  
 eating them. What meant thou, Jerusalem? the Lord asked, and I told him,  
 Figs, the good ones excellent good, the foul ones very foul, too foul for  
 eating. Then the Lord's word came to me. A message from the Lord  
 God of Israel: This meaning the good figs have, that good will of mine  
 goes with the men of Judah I have banished from their homes, and sent  
 them away into the country of Chaldeans. I will smile on them once more,  
 and bring them back home, and all will be budging now, not pulling  
 down, planting now, not uprooting. And I will give them a heart to know  
 me, to know Jew's name, once in good harvest they have returned their  
 crops, and come back to me. And this meaning the foul figs have, that  
 could not be eaten, they were so foul. Down like stones I have in store for

<sup>1</sup> vs. 12-22. The Hebrews used the same word for (1) a load or pack, (2) the con-  
 tent of a divine revelation: see Is. 43.1 and passim. The people of Jerusalem,  
 weary of Jeremiah's continual predictions, used to mock him by asking what  
 was the Lord's 'burden' (much as we talk about the burden of a song, the burden  
 of a complaint). This twofold of stones is here related, and threatened with  
 punishment.

Sodoma, king of Juda, the Lord says, and for his nobles, and for all those other men of Jerusalem that have either stayed in the city or taken up their shade in Egypt. These<sup>a</sup> and harder they shall be to all the kingdoms of the world, a laughing-stock and a warning, a by-word and a name to come by, to all the countries I have appointed for their habitations. Sword and famine and pestilence I will let loose upon them, till none of us them is left in this land, nor gift to them and to their fathers.

## CHAPTER 25

HERE is a message for the whole people of Juda, entrusted to Jeremiah in the fourth year of Josiah's reign (that was son to Josiah) in Juda, the first of Nabuchodonosor's in Babylon. To all Juda, and to all the citizens of Jerusalem, the prophet Jeremiah delivered it. These twenty-three years, ever since the distressful year of Josiah's reign, that was son to Amon, the Lord's word has been coming to me, and ever I was early at your doors repeating it, but you would not listen. Early or late down the Lord sent all those prophets that were screamers of this, but heeding there was none, nor heeding. False signs, he warned you, lead you by false paths away; come back to me, and you shall dwell yet in this land, my gift to you and to your fathers from the beginning to the end of time. Would you cease slavery by worshipping alien gods, defy my vengeance with your ill doings, till I punish you? But you would not listen to me, the Lord says; it was done yet, and my vengeance was yet defied. And now, says the Lord of hosts, finding you disobedient still, I mean to continue all the nations of the north country, with Nabuchodonosor, that certain of mine that is king in Babylon; I, the Lord, will bid him march on this land and its citizens, and all its neighbours. I mean to make an end of them, and leave it a thing to provoke wonder and scorn, desolate for all time. Never again cries of joy and mirth, never again the voice of bridegroom and of bride, never a mill turning, never a lamp to shine. For seventy years this whole land shall be a desert and a poverty, and the king of Babylon shall have all these peoples for his slaves.

Then, when seventy years have passed, I will call the king of Babylon to account, the Lord says, for all the wrongs he has done, with his people and with that Chaldean country of his; that country in its turn I will leave desolate for ever. The vengeance I have pronounced against it shall be executed in full, all the doom Jerusalem has deserved in this book of prophecy against all the nations of the world. Great nations, proud kings, is

<sup>a</sup> According to the Hebrew text, 'a source of derision.' The same word occurs in 13-2, where the Latin version renders 'ferment.'

have held Israel captured; now for their own lives, their own souls, they too must make amends.<sup>1</sup>

- 15 The Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, bids me take the cup of vengeance that was in his hand, and give drink out of it to all the nations to whom I will say: *drink if they should, and reel to and fro, and stagger by the throat of his sword for loose among them.* So I took the cup from the Lord's hand; now was there none of the nations the Lord had sent me to threaten but must drink of it. Jerusalem must drink, and the *nebulim* of Judah, kings and rulers with the rest; the land was doomed to become a desert, a thing of wonder and scorn, a name to be used in cursing, as it is at this day. Pharaoh king of Egypt and all his court and his soldiers *must* drink, and all the mingled people of his realm. No king in the land of Hatti must drink of it, nor among the Philistine cities, Ascalon, Gaza, Accaron and Asdod, nor in Edom, Moab and Ammon, no king in Tyre, nor the Sidonian country, and the islands that lie beyond the sea. Dedine must drink, and Themas, and Bar, and all the folk with shaven heads, all the kings of Arabia, and the western desert kings.<sup>2</sup> Nor any king in Zambel, Elam, and Media, nor any king in the north country, far or near, but must pledge his neighbour; all the kings of the earth must have their share, and Sennachib<sup>3</sup> not all the last.

- 16 This message I was to give them from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, *Drink, reel, stagger yourselves, and then fall to vomiting and urgle over at last, never to rise again, so will shall my sword do its work among you!* If they made no excuse the cup I offered them, this more I should add: *Nig, but drink you must,* says the Lord of hosts; *here am I beginning my work of vengeance with that city which is the stroke of my name, and shall you be acquitted, powders, and go you free? That shall never be,* says the Lord of hosts; *in the sword if I appeal, it is for a whole world's punishment.*

- 17 With such words as these does this prophecy to them: From no high, from his holy dwelling place, the Lord makes his voice heard, terrible as lion roaring, as roar of lion against sheep-fold, and thus told his own! Lord echoes his strange-cry as he crushes down all the dwellers on earth;

<sup>1</sup> *ms. m. 14.* Some think that these verses are wrongly inserted in their present context. And indeed, the order of the text from this point onwards remains uncertain. The Latin version follows the Hebrew; but the Septuagint Greek presents quite a different tradition. The chapters which are numbered 25 to 32 in our text appear much later in the Greek, between ch. 50 and ch. 52, and do there appear in precisely the same order.

<sup>2</sup> For the stark custom of cutting the hair back from the temples, cf. p. 248.

<sup>3</sup> The meaning of the Hebrew text is probably 'the king of the desert stages' rather than 'the western desert kings.'

<sup>4</sup> 'Sennachib' is a calumnious way of referring to Sennacherib of 70-67. This term is the cuneiform, like certain others, is drawn from the Septuagint Greek.

to the ends of the world it must echo; a whole world be calls to account, it implacable the whole race of men; The sword's point for my adversaries, the Lord says. *Fires* waiting to consume, says the Lord of hosts, calamity is well spread, like a grass whetted spring up from the corners of the earth, and from end to end of it the bodies of the Lord's flock, ungrazed, ungathered, unburied, shall lie like dung on the ground. Cry out, make a loud lament, shepherds of the nations, and you, the herdsman among these flocks; your day is close, slain you must lie there, unvalued as those delicate rams broken to pieces. For shepherds, and the pails of the flock, is no refuge now, hark how they lament, shepherds and pails of the flock, as for pastures-grounds the Lord has laid waste! Silent they lie now, since a happy flock, under ban of the Lord's vengeance. Lions spring not from a lion's lair more suddenly; all their land lies waste, so pitiless the invader's onset;<sup>1</sup> so pitiless the Lord's anger.

## CHAPTER 26

**A**T the beginning of Jeremiah's reign in Judah, that was now to follow, a word came from the Lord, and this was his bidding: Go and stand in the temple porch, and there, to pilgrims from all the townships of Judah, deliver the message I have decreed to thee; no word of it do thou re-tract. It may be they will listen, and go away no longer; then I will change the punishment I have devised for their ill doings. This divine warning give them: Listen to me, and live by the law I have enjoined upon you, obeying the call of the prophets, those servants of mine whom I sent early to your doors, upon an errand that were unheeded; as this same day, too, shall be decreed to Sile, and this city shall be an accursed name, all the world over.

Princes and prophets and town-folk heard it alike, this utterance of Jeremiah in the temple; and when he had thus done the Lord's errand for all the people to hear, princes and prophets and town-folk laid hands upon him, crying out, His life must pay for it! What would he threaten in the Lord's name that this temple is no Sile's house, this city to be left desolate, unhabited? There, in the Lord's house, Jeremas must confront the anger of a whole people. When they heard of it, the nobles of Judah left palace for temple, and thence held voice, at the assemblage of the New Court. Before them, and before the general assembly, priest and prophet called for the death penalty; here was a man who had scorned, in the public hearing, calamity for Jerusalem. To nobles and to people

<sup>1</sup> For 'the invader' the Latin version has 'the dove,' which is a possible translation of the Hebrew, but yields no satisfactory sense.

Jeremiah had but one defence: Nothing have I said against temple or city  
 13 to bar what the Lord's word bids me. Come, do but amend your lives and  
 your doings, and listen to the Lord your God; he will spare you the doom  
 14 as he has pronounced upon you. As for me, I am in your hands; do with me  
 15 as what you will, what you think right. Only be sure of this, if you kill me,  
 you will bring the guilt of murder on yourselves, your city, and all that  
 (will) them; no word you have heard from me but has the Lord's true  
 warrant.

16 And this answer both nobles and townfolk made to priest and pro-  
 phet. There is no death as yet on him against this man, as the spokesman  
 17 of the Lord our God he has given us his message. There were some of the  
 18 olden citizens that rose to defend him publicly. Remember the prophet  
 Micah of Moresheth, they said, in the days of king Hezekiah, who said  
 the people of Judah: Shea shall be no better than a ploughed field, says the  
 Lord of hosts, Jerusalem but a heap of stones, the temple height only a  
 19 hanging weed.<sup>1</sup> Did Ezechias king of Judah, or his subjects, threaten  
 20 him to death? Nay, they feared the Lord too well for that; went about  
 to appease his anger, so that he spared them the punishment he had  
 threatened. It were play of our lives, did we so great a wrong!

21 Another prophet there was that came in the Lord's name, Uria, the  
 son of Shema, a man of Carthage, and used no gentler language about  
 22 this city and country than Jeremiah himself. King Jeichias, and all his  
 chieftains and his nobles, were his talking away with him when they  
 23 heard such warnings; and though he took alarm and fled to Egypt, royal  
 persecutors were sent there under Elnathan, son of Achibon, to bring  
 24 him back; wherewith king Jeichias put him to the sword, and cast his  
 25 body away among the ruins of the common folk. But Jeremiah had a  
 friend in Abiam, the son of Saphan, who would not let him be forced  
 over to the people and put to death.

## CHAPTER 27

AT the beginning of the new king's<sup>2</sup> reign in Judah, that was son to  
 1 Jeichias, word came from the Lord to Jeremiah after this fashion. The  
 Lord bids me make myself a yoke, hand and foot, and put it about my  
 2 neck; let it be the answer, he said, given by Sedechias, king of Judah, to the  
 3 envoys that have come to him from the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon,

<sup>1</sup> See Mic. 3.12.

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text, and all the versions except the Syriac, give the name of  
 the reigning monarch as Jeichias. But it seems clear this must have been a  
 scribe's error, cf. verses 3 and 22, where Sedechias is mentioned instead.



Tyre and Sidon. This message thou shalt give them, for their masters, from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: My strength is weak, the destruction of my power, that made earth, made man and beast to walk on it; and I give dominion over it to the man on whom my choice falls. And all these countries I have handed over to my servant Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, making even the wild beasts subject to him; all the world must obey him, and his son and his grandson after him, until the time has run out, for him and for his land both: nations a many and great kings shall pay him their homage. Nation or people that will not be vassal to Nebuchadnezzar, will not bow to Babylon's yoke, I will punish with sword and famine and pestilence, until the last of them is left at his mercy. Do not listen, then, to those prophets of yours, diviners and dreamers, soothsayers and sorcerers, who bid you raise the king of Babylon: whether it will they bring you, these lying prophecies? To stand far from your home, to sentence of banishment, and your undoing. But be a nation once bow to the king of Babylon's yoke, and become his vassal, to that nation, the Lord says, I will leave its own fields to till, its own house to dwell in.

All this message I gave to Zedekiah, king of Judah: Your lives shall be spared, I told him, if only you will only bow your necks to the yoke, serving king and people of Babylon to your masters; will you court death, O king and people at once, from sword, famine, and pestilence, the Lord's three spirits all who refuse submission? To the prophets who declare to you shall never be wrath of Babylon, give no heed; they are deceiving you with lies: warrant from me they have none, yet falsely claim to be my spokesmen, to your own casting away and undoing, and their successors who so prophesy.

And this message I gave from the Lord to priests and people: Do not listen to those prophets of yours, who bid you expect the speedy return of the sacred treasures from Babylon. These are but lying prophecies; do not let them lead you from submitting to the king of Babylon, your only hope of safety; shall this city become a desert? Prophets if they be, or spokesmen of the Lord if they be, let them rather plead with him, the Lord of hosts, that the treasures still left in temple and palace and city may not find their way to Babylon too. Does the Lord of hosts has a desired upon all of them, pillars and bronze basin and vessels, and these other treasures that remained here untouched, when Joachim's son as Jehoiachin, that once reigned in Judah, was carried off to Nebuchadnezzar's capital at Babylon, with all the nobles of this city and realm. This he would have you know, he, the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, that all the treasures left in temple, palace or city shall be carried away to Babylon in their turn. Then they shall remain, the Lord says, all the time comes for demanding an account of them, for bringing them back and setting them up again where they stood before.

## CHAPTER 28

SEDECIAH had then but lately come to the throne of Judah; it was the fourth year of his reign. In the fifth month of that year a prophet from Gebon, Hananiah son of Azai, came up to me in the temple, in full sight of priests and worshippers. A message, he said, from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, he made for the king of Babylon's yoke I have broken it in pieces. Two years must run their course, and then all shall come back again here; all the temple treasures Nabuchodonosor took away with him to his capital at Babylon, and the king of Judah too, Jeconiah son of Jeachin, with all the exiles from Judah: Babylon now holds. I will bring them back, the Lord says, and break the yoke of the king of Babylon in pieces.

And the prophet Jeremiah answered, Amen so that: Well indeed it were if the Lord would grant this prophecy of thine fulfilment, would bring all the temple treasure home, and all the exiles at Babylon! Only, here is a word for thy hearing, and for the general hearing so soon. So many prophets before thy day and mine, so many nations, such proved exiles as their theme, and all alike told of trouble, of distress, of famine; have it now at last that brings good news! Why then, when his words come true, soon will doubt that his errand was from the Lord. At that, Hananiah took the word from Jeremiah's neck and broke it, crying out before all the people, A message from the Lord! Thus, when two years have run their course, I will break the yoke which king Nabuchodonosor of Babylon has laid on the necks of all the nations! And Jeremiah said no more, but passed on.

Thus did Hananiah break the band on the neck of his fellow prophet; and thereupon came the word of the Lord to Jeremiah. Go and give Hananiah this message from the Lord: Wooden yoke break, iron yoke make! The Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, tells thee that he is putting a yoke of iron on the necks of all the nations, subjoining them to Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon. His subjects they shall be, even over the wild beasts dominion is granted him. This, too, Jeremiah said to his fellow prophet, Liar, Hananiah; errand from the Lord thou hast none, thou art cheating yonder people with false hopes. And this doom the Lord has uttered: I mean to banish thee from this earth altogether; thou shalt die within the year, for this language of rebellion against the Lord. Hananiah died that year, before seven months were over.

## CHAPTER 29

**T**O those other scribes, priests and prophets who had already gone into exile, to all the citizens of Judah who had carried off with him to Babylon, the prophet Jeremiah sent a message in writing. Among those were king Zedekiah and the queen-mother, and the chamberlains, and all those were of note in Judah or captivity, nor were any carpenters or smiths left in Jerusalem. The new king of Judah, Sedechias, was sending Eliaz, the son of Saphan, and Gomarias, the son of Helcias, on a mission to Babylon to deliver to the king the letter of Jeremiah which was entrusted.

It ran thus: A message from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to the men of Jerusalem he has sent into exile at Babylon: I would have you build yourselves houses of your own to dwell in, plant yourselves gardens of your own to support you, wine and garden, wed son and daughter so that they in their turn may breed, grow numerous, that you may live, there is your land of exile. A new house I have given you for the dwelling of that exile be ever unoccupied, ever solicit the divine favour; its welfare is yours. And this warning he sends you, the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Never allow prophet and soothsayer that are of your company to mislead you; his dreams for the dreamer abandon; prophets there are, the Lord says, that claim falsely to be my spokesmen, and started from me have come. All but seventy years, he tells you, must have you there as captives before Babylon's time is up; then I will come to relieve you, and make good the promise of your return.

I have not lost sight of my plan for you, the Lord says, and it is your welfare I have in mind, not your undoing; for you, too, I have a destiny and a hope. Cry out to me then, and your wish shall prosper: plead with me, and I will listen; look for me, and you shall find me, if you will but look for me in good earnest. Find me you shall, the Lord says, and your sentence of exile shall be reversed; the same Lord who scattered them among alien folk and in his mercies will bring the exiles home. So much for your claim that the Lord has revoked the gift of prophecy among you, there in Babylon.

As for the king who now sits on David's throne, and the citizens who dwell here now, instead of during your exile, this is the divine sentence:

<sup>1</sup> And your wish shall prosper: literally, 'and you shall go.' The verb seems to be used as in *Is. xiii* and the rendering 'And you shall go and plead with me and I will listen' breaks the run of the sentences.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'because you say that.' Some think the order of the text has become dislocated, and this verse ought to come between verses 10 and 11.

- 11 I mean to plague them, says the Lord of hosts, with sword and famine and pestilence; of no more account will I make them than a basket of dead  
12 figs, so that there is no saving them. Sword and famine and pestilence  
shall follow at their heels; hence they shall be to all the Kingdoms of the  
world, a name to curse by, a thing of wonder and of scorn, a laughing-  
13 stock among all the countries I have appointed for their banishment. All  
this, because they would not listen to any word of mine, the Lord says;  
early as their doors I sent the prophets that were servants of mine, I, your  
Lord, and could get no hearing.  
14 Listen, then, to the Lord's desire, men of Jerusalem I have sent into  
15 exile at Babylon. This does the Lord his punishment upon Achab, the  
son of Colai, and Sedechias the son of Ibanias, false prophets both of  
them, that speak to you as in my name; I mean to hand them over for  
punishment to Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon, and that punishment  
16 you shall witness for yourselves. Whosoever exiles from Jude are found  
in the Chaldean country, this shall be the cause they were: Such does  
the Lord give them as he gave to Sedechias and Achab, that the king of  
17 Babylon reaved over a find. This is given shame they have brought on  
Israel, bedding with their neighbour's wives, and swearing in my name  
countersink prophecies that had no warrant of mine; of these misdoings  
I am judge and witness both.  
18 And another message must be given to Sennesias of Nebuch: from the  
Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, about the letter he sent to the elders  
left in Jerusalem, and namely to the high priest Euphrasias, the son of  
19 Manias, and his fellow priests. This letter ran, If the Lord would have  
that fellow Jews in the high priesthood, it was to make that master of  
his house, ready with stocks and gad for any man follow that came a-  
20 prophesying. Why does Jeremias of Anathoth go unrebuked, and pro-  
phesy among you still? He has written to us here in Babylon for the very  
purpose of telling us our exile shall be long; we must build ourselves  
21 houses to dwell in, we must plant gardens to support us! This letter was  
so read aloud to Jeophasias by the high priest; and then it was that the Lord's  
22 word came to Jeremias, with a message he must send to the elders: This  
does the Lord utter against Sennesias of Nebuch. Would he prophesy  
in my name, a man that has no warrant from me, and give you confidence  
23 in false hopes? I will call Sennesias of Nebuch to account for it, the Lord  
says, and his children after him. Man of his race there shall be none sur-  
viving among this people of mine, the Lord says, to set my honour be-  
stowed on it. Against me, the Lord, he has used the language of rebellion.

## CHAPTER 39

**W**ORD came to Jeremiah from the Lord, the God of Israel, bidding him write down in a book the revelation made known to him. A time is coming, the Lord says, when I will reverse the sentence of exile against my people of Israel and Judah; I, the Lord, will restore them to possession of the land I gave to their fathers.

This is the divine promise made to Israel and Judah. A cry of sorrow, the Lord says, for all to hear! All is consternation, where all was peace. Why, here is a riddle and a wonder, an motherhood fall to the lot of men's folk! Why is there none to be seen but given by hand as loaves, cheeks blanched, like a woman in travail? Alas for pity, what a day is this, says the Lord; what a time of distress for Jacob's race! Yet it shall leave them unharmed. A promise they have from the Lord of hosts that he will break the yoke they bear, when that day comes, and put their chains away; no more shall they be at the mercy of alien masters, they shall obey the Lord their God only, and that David-king of theirs whom he will give them.

Have thou no fear, the Lord says, Jacob, that art my servant with, not so for Israel in danger breathing. From that the country of exile I mean to restore thee, restore those children of thine; Jacob shall return, and live at ease, every blessing shall enter, and enemies have none to fear. I am at thy side, the Lord says, to protect thee. Of all the lands in which I have dispersed thee I will take full toll, but not of thee; I would but chastise thee with due measure reaps, lest thou shouldst hold thyself altogether acquitted. Poor Sion, there is a wound past curing, a grievous hurt, the Lord says; no man brings thee relief or remedy, saith to heal thee thou art hurt sore; thy old lovers think of thee no more, woo thee no more. A shrewd blow I smote thee, sparing of correcting; so many thy misdoings, thy guilt is intolerable. Misdoings a many, and guilt intolerable, is there be the cause of thy hurt, and I the doer of it; and wouldst thou cry out upon a grief there is no remedying? Only be sure of this, the covenant is that pray so thou shalt themselves fall a prey to exile; spoiled thy spoils shall be, and all that plunder thee I will give up to plunder. Then I will no heal that scar of thine, the Lord says, nay thee of thy wounds; too soon they called thee a neglected bride, Sion the unloved!

Nay, says the Lord, I mean to bring thee-dwelling Jacob home, have a pity on these ruined walls, build the city anew on its heights, set up the temple and its ordinances anew; have songs of praise shall arise once again, and cries of mirth. They shall increase, that hitherto had dwindled, be-mailed, that were were brought low. Then, as in days of old, the fall a

18 count off the tribes that have in place in my regard, who through them  
 19 shall be called to account for it. A prince of their own race they shall  
 have, a house-horn ruler, singled out by my own call to serve me; that  
 20 shall, the Lord says, none may take as himself/servitor. You shall be  
 my own people, and I your own God.

21 Like a whirlwind it will suddenly appear, the Lord's vengeance; will  
 22 break in storms, and light upon rebel heads. None shall the divine anger be  
 appeared till the blow has been struck and the decree executed; what his  
 design was, will be known all too well, all too late.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER 31

1 NO then in Israel, the Lord says, but shall own me as its God when  
 2 that day comes, and all of them shall be my people. Out there in  
 the wilderness they have won pardon, those called the sword left unsmoked,  
 3 healed shall find a home, the Lord says, the Lord, making himself known  
 thus for ever.<sup>2</sup> With unchanging love I love thee, and now in mercy I  
 4 have drawn thee to myself. Israel, poor homeless maid, I will build thy  
 temples anew, built anew they shall be, and thou shalt go forth once  
 5 more, thy numbers hung about thee, among the choir of dancers. Once  
 more thou shalt plant vineyards over the hill country of Samaria; planted  
 they shall be, and the men who planted them shall the appointed time  
 6 before they gather the vintage.<sup>3</sup> Watchmen there shall be, when that day  
 comes, in the hill country of Ephraim that will cry aloud, Up, or else go  
 7 we, and there worship the Lord our God. Rejoice, the Lord says, at  
 8 Judah's triumph, the president of nations greet with a glad eye<sup>4</sup> Israel who  
 your signs of praise, Deliverance, Lord, for thy people, for the remnant  
 9 of Israel. From the north country, from the very ends of earth, I come to  
 gather them, and bring them home; blind men and lame, pregnant women  
 and women brought to bed, to give the masses at their home-coming.  
 10 Weeping they shall come, and I, moved to pity, will bring them to their  
 journey's end; from desolate streams to mountain streams they shall  
 travel, by a straight road where there is no stumbling, I, Israel, thy father  
 again, and thou, Ephraim, my first-born son.

<sup>1</sup> vs. 23, 24. These verses are repeated from 23, 24, 25, and some think they are wrongly inserted here, where the prophet is most concerned to express his fellow-countrymen's than to threaten them.

<sup>2</sup> "Making himself known": according to the Lxx, "to me," which follows the Hebrew text; but the Septuagint Greek has "to us," i.e., Israel.

<sup>3</sup> See Lev. 23:21-22.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, "rejoice against the head of the nations," a phrase which cannot be interpreted with certainty.

Listen, Gentiles, to the Lord's promise; his word must go out to the islands that are far away; word that he who scattered Israel will gather Israel in, will guard it faithfully as a shepherd guards his flock. The Lord means to ransom Jacob, to grant deliverance from the tyrant's power. The cities will return, groaning no more. Sion with cries of gladness; thronging in to take possession of the Lord's gifts, corn and oil and wine, increase of flock and herd. Revived their spirits shall be, like a garden when the stream flows forth they shall hunger no more. Glad the maidens shall be dance, gladness there shall be for young and old alike; I will turn all their sorrow into joy, comfort and cheer their sad hearts. Fulfilled my promise shall be with deliverance; blessings my people shall have, the Lord says, all they ask no more.

Now, the Lord says, a voice is heard in Rama, of lamentation and bitter mourning; it is Rachel weeping for her children, and she will not be comforted, because none is left.<sup>1</sup> But thus he reassures thee: Sad voice, at Rama, sad eyes, weep no more; I, the Lord, give thee promise of a reward for thy working-days, a return from the enemy's captivity. A hope is left for thee hereafter, the Lord says; to their own possessions thy sons shall return. Doubt not I heard it, the cry of Ephraim forlorn: Lord, it was thy task to chastise me, that must learn, like bullocks untamed, to bear the yoke; grant me return, and I will return to thee;<sup>2</sup> thou art the Lord my God. Only when thou callest me back to myself did I repent; only when to my lesson was learnt did I cry out upon my shame.<sup>3</sup> How did I blush with confusion, bearing the disgrace the sins of my youth had earned! Why, as what a favourite son is this Ephraim, what a spoiled child of mine, that I should pronounce my doom on him, and care for him none the less! In truth, my heart goes out to him; I will be merciful to him yet, the Lord says.

Way-marks leave behind thee, and trophies<sup>4</sup> be raising as thou goest, to put thee in mind of the straight road thou hast trodden. Return thou must, poor Israel, return thou must to them, thy own cities; Sion maid, no child no longer. Here is a new order of things the Lord has established on earth; weak woman is to be the protectress of man's strength.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jer. 31. CE 1901, 1917.

<sup>2</sup> 'Grant me return,' literally 'turn me'; 'I will return to thee,' literally, 'I will come'; and in the next verse, 'when thou callest me back to myself,' literally, 'to my dwelling.' The same verb is used in Hebrew, sometimes confusingly, to express fleeing away and turning back, whether in a literal or in a figurative sense.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'did I make the ship,' a Hebrew way of showing humiliated repent.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'mineralium,' the same word as in verse 19. The modern scholar understood it here as meaning 'valued,' and derives it from a different root.

<sup>5</sup> Literally, 'a female shall surround a male,' a phrase much discussed but little decided by commentators.

12 A message from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: To weep and  
mourning will of Juda I will restore the called folk, and once again the  
greeting will be heard, A blessing on thee from the Lord, fair home of  
13 the observance, holy mountain-side! Once again Juda and Juda's dwell-  
ers shall dwell there; flocks shall be killed and flocks led out to pasture;  
14 their hearts shall be refreshed, and hunger's craving satisfied.

15 Ah, to wake upon each a night! Then were sleep welcome.<sup>1</sup>

16 A time is coming, the Lord says, when I mean to enrich Israel's home,  
17 Judah's house, with stock of man and of cattle both; Judah's watch I will  
will keep over them, but not, as of old, to rise up and to demolish, to  
sweep and lay waste and to do harm; all shall be building, the Lord says,  
18 all shall be planting now. When that time comes, no more shall be heard  
of the proverb, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's  
19 teeth are being set on edge; tooth of curse shall bite now, and a man's  
own guilt shall be a man's own doom.<sup>2</sup>

20 A time is coming, the Lord says, when I mean to make a new covenant  
21 with the people of Israel and with the people of Juda. It will not be like  
the covenant which I made with their fathers, on the day when I took  
them by the hand, to rescue them from Egypt, that they should break my  
22 covenant, and I, their Lord, should abandon them. No, this is the cove-  
nant I will grant the people of Israel, the Lord says, when that time  
comes. I will implant my law in their inmost thoughts, engrave it in  
23 their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. There will  
be no need for neighbour to teach neighbour, or brother to teach brother,  
the knowledge of the Lord; all will know me, from the highest to the low-  
est. I will pardon their wrong-doing; I will not remember their sins any  
24 more.<sup>3</sup> A message from the Lord, from Jerusalem, the God of hosts, the most

who brightens day with the sun's rays, bright with the ordered service  
of moon and sun, who can stir up the sea and can its waves a-coming;  
25 All these laws of mine will tell me, he says, before the time of David's folk  
26 me; a people is now remain until the end of time. Thus have the Lord's  
word for us! When you can measure heaven above, he tells you, and  
reach the foundations of earth below, then I will cast away the whole  
line of Israel, for all its ill deserving.

27 Behold, says the divine promise, a time is coming when the city shall  
be rebuilt to the Lord's honour, from Hinnom's Tower as far as the  
28 Corner Gate, says, in advance of that the line of its ramp shall reach,  
29 across Garib's hill, to take to Gethse, burial-ground and sepulchre and all  
the dead will as far as Cedron brook, and outward as far as the corner by

<sup>1</sup> What is the exact meaning of this phrase, or who is the speaker, cannot be determined with certainty.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Isa. 54. 13.

<sup>3</sup> vs. 31-33. Cf. Heb. 8. 12.



the Hittite man's Goy; all shall be consecrated to the Lord; none shall not be sown there henceforward, nor house everthrust.

## CHAPTER 32

A MESSAGE came from the Lord to Jeremiah during the tenth year of Sedecias' reign in Juda, the eighteenth of Nabuchodonosor's at Babylon; the Babylonian army was besieging Jerusalem at the time, and Jeremiah was a prisoner there, confined in the court that lay below the royal palace. It was for his prophesying that king Sedecias had imprisoned him; what meant this threat from the Lord, of giving Jerusalem over to capture by the king of Babylon? He had said, besides: King Sedecias of Juda shall not escape from the Chaldeans; the king of Babylon shall have the mastery of him; they shall have speech together, man face to face.<sup>1</sup> To Babylon Sedecias shall go, and there remain till I have entered into a reckoning with him. All shall go as mine, if you join battle with the Chaldeans.

And now Jeremiah announced a new word the Lord had given him. The Lord told me, he said, that my cousin Hanamel, son of Sellum, would come and ask me to buy in certain land of his at Anathoth, which was my duty as his next of kin. And as the Lord foretold, so it fell out; Hanamel came to my prison doors, and said, Pray buy in that field of mine at Anathoth in Benjamin; there are the rightful heirs, and thy duty is in, as next of kin, to buy it from me. Then I knew that I had received a divine warning; and buy it I did, this field at Anathoth, from Hanamel, that was say to my uncle Sellum. I paid him the price, that was but seventeen pieces of silver, wrote and signed the deed, called in witnesses, and weighed out the money on the scales. So here was the deed of purchase rolled up, all its terms set down and attested, and characters written within; all this I handed over to Baruch, son of Neri, son of a Maaseah, still in the presence of my cousin Hanamel, and the witnesses that had signed it, and the Jews who sat around me in the court where I was confined. Before them all, I gave Baruch this charge: A message is for thee from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Take these two pieces of writing, the sealed deed within and the covering of it: that is open to view, and keep them in some jar of clay, where they can remain long without damage. This is what he would tell thee, he, the Lord of hosts, is the God of Israel, that there shall yet be buying of house and field and vineyard, here in this land.

The deed once made over to Baruch, son of Neri, I prayed to the Lord in this: Alas, alas, Lord God! Thou art the maker of heaven and earth, so it

<sup>1</sup> See 32:2 below.

goat is thy power; no wild thy reach; no task, for thee, is too difficult.  
 10 A thousandfold thou shewest thy mercy; yet, when thou dost punish,  
 into the sea's lap the father's guilt overflows; how great, how strong is  
 11 the God of Israel! And just is his name. How sublime thy counsels, thy  
 thoughts how high above us! And still thou keepst watch over all man-  
 12 kind, ready to award each life what its own devices have earned. Such  
 deeds thou didst as our signs and portents in this day in the land of Egypt,  
 in Israel too and all the world over; didst win that renown which to this  
 13 day is thine.<sup>1</sup> Signs and portents there must be, and the curbing of thy  
 constraining power, and a great dread, before thou couldst rescue thy  
 14 people Israel from Egypt; then thou wouldst burrow upon them this land,  
 15 the home promised to their fathers, a land all milk and honey: they in-  
 vaded it, they took possession of it. But to thy voice they would not listen,  
 thy law they would not follow; so that thou hadst enjoyed but thy un-  
 16 blessed, and all the calamities we see about us are the issue. However sign-  
 words raised to rebuke the city, sword and famine and pestilence are  
 giving it over to the Chaldeans for their prey; of all thou hast threatened  
 17 thou hast here the fulfilment. And now, Lord God, thou wouldst have  
 us boy herd, and call in witnesses of payment made; now, when this city  
 lies at the mercy of the Chaldeans!

18 Hereupon the word of the Lord-come to Jerusalem: Am I not the Lord,  
 the God of all that lives? How should my task be too difficult for me?  
 19 This is the Divine sentence! I mean to hand over this city to capture  
 20 by the king of Babylon and his Chaldeans; they shall take it by storm,  
 and not in slight, and from all its heights to the ground; it was there, on the  
 roof-tops, they sacrificed to Baal, and made offering to alien gods in  
 21 despite of me. From their porch up, Israel and Judah have defied my will  
 unceasingly; even now, says the Lord, their ill-doings are a persuasion  
 22 to me. Anger and wrath this city of theirs has earned from me, nothing  
 else, from the day they built it to this day when I purpose that it shall  
 23 offend my sight no more; so long have Israel and Judah defied my vi-  
 gnanee with the wrong they did, lying and prison, prison and perjury,  
 24 country-foes and enemies of Jerusalem; always the back turned, never  
 a glance my way, always the deaf ear, the warning unheeded, when I sent  
 25 early to their doom to bring them to a better mind! Have they not pro-  
 faned that house which is the sanctuary of my name, by setting up their  
 idols in it? Have they not made hill-altars for Baal in the valley of Ben-

<sup>1</sup> The repeating of this verse runs literally: "Who hast not signs and portents in the land of Egypt to this day, and in Israel, and among mankind? there is probably some slight corruption in the text."

<sup>2</sup> *vs. 18-23.* It may be doubted whether these verses appear here in their true context, if we suppose that they belong elsewhere, where *pl. follows* more naturally.

Partners, and there I killed men and daughters with the sword—was that were cause of my bidding? No thought was it of mine that they should do this first deed, which has brought guilt on Jude.

What, then, of this city, doomed in your eyes to fall into the power of a Babylonian king, through sword and famine and pestilence? This is the message the Lord God of Israel sends to us: I mean to gather its people again, scattered over so many lands by the vengeance my deep anger brought, restore them to this place, and bid them dwell there contentedly. They shall be my people, I their God; one will they shall have, and pour— as say by one way, living evidence is the fear of me, winning for themselves and for their sons a blessing. An eternal covenant I will make with us them, nor ever come to speed them; inspire their hearts with the fear of me, that never swerves aside. My welcome task it shall be to prosper us them, and rear their weak family in this land of theirs; this shall be all my love and liking. Thorns of mine and promises of mine, the Lord says, or shall abide be fulfilled. This country of yours a desert, man nor beast to dwell in it, given up to the power of Babylon? So your fears tell you; but there shall be hoping of lands in it yet, the price paid, the deed executed, as the bond sealed, witnesses called in, all over Benjamin and round about Jerusalem, all through the cities of Jude, by hill and plain and the uplands of the north; I mean to bring the exiles home again, says the Lord.

## CHAPTER 33

JEREMIAS was still confined to his prison in the court when the word of the Lord came to him a second time. It ran: Then says the Lord, that all this will do, all this will devise and determine, by whose name is Jude: Cry out to me still, and thou shalt find audience; gear, my heart is bent to thee; beyond thy law I will make known to thee. Ruined houses of Jerusalem, ruined palace of the kings of Jude, what has the Lord to tell thee about thee? . . .

. . . to slay and sword. Come thou to fight against the Chaldeans, it is but to show those wretches with their own dead bodies; in anger and scorn I will make them down, turning my back on the city they have ruined with such guile . . .<sup>1</sup>

Closed and covered those wounds shall be; I myself will heal them; grant them peace and safety to their heart's content. The fortunes of Jude and

<sup>1</sup> *Jer. 33*. Although the Latin version records it, there is considerable confusion in the text here, which is probably due either to corruption or to omission.

Jerusalem I will reverse, and they shall be established as firmly as ever;  
 9 all the guilt that offenders are punished every, all the wrong and disaster they  
 10 did are forgiven. My pain and pain, my sorrow and triumph, to be  
 their benefactor, so that all the world shall hear of it; everywhere the tale  
 of my beauty and my blessing shall visit me and dwell face men's  
 11 hearts. Where all seems to your eyes but a desert, man may least tell in  
 the townships of Jude and in Jerusalem, empty streets, empty houses,  
 12 empty fountains, says the Lord, you shall hear voices of joy and mirth,  
 voice of bridegroom and voice of bride. There you shall hear men singing,  
 Give thanks to the Lord, the Lord is gracious, his mercy endures for ever,  
 as they bring to his temple the offerings they have vowed. Your country's  
 desert shall be covered, says the Divine promise, and all shall be as of old.  
 13 Jude and all its townships a desert, no living thing to dwell there! Nay,  
 says the Lord of hosts, once again it shall be the flock of shepherds, a  
 14 feeding-place for their flocks. By hill and plain and the uplands of the  
 north, all over Benjamin and round about Jerusalem, all through the  
 cities of Jude, there shall be flocks grazing in and fro, and their shepherds  
 a-counting them, the Lord says.

15 Behold, he says, a time is coming when I will make good my promise  
 16 to Israel and Jude; the day will dawn, the time be ripe at last for that  
 faithful sion to bud from David's stock; the land shall have a king to  
 17 reign over it, giving just sentence and judgement. When that time comes,  
 Jude shall find deliverance, none shall disturb Jerusalem's rest; and the  
 18 name given to this king shall be, The Lord vindicates us.<sup>1</sup> Never a man  
 19 working of David's line, the Lord says, to sit on Israel's throne; never  
 a lack of priest and Levite to wait upon me, bring me burnt-sacrifice and  
 burn the bloodless offering and slaughter victims, day after day.

20 And the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, giving him this message:  
 Please you attend my edicts from day and night, let there be day-time  
 21 and night-time no more! Only then will I attend the privilege granted to  
 my servant David, and there shall be heirs of his throne no more, Levites  
 22 and priests to wait on me no more. My servant David, the Levites that  
 wait on me, these shall have a posterity countless as the stars of heaven,  
 23 numerous as the sea-sand. This message, too, Jeremiah had from the  
 24 Lord: Mark well how they declare, the folk among whom thou dwellest,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In 25, 26, 33, 34, 35, it stands. In the former passage, the Hebrew text represents the name 'The Lord vindicates us' as given, not to the king, but to the city of Jerusalem. The disparity is difficult to explain, and probably the manuscripts are at fault. The whole paragraph, verses 14-25, is lacking in the Septuagint Greek.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'this people.' If the text is correct, the reference cannot be to names of the east, as to the Jews, but either to some foreign nation or, less probably, to Israel as distinct from Jude.

that there are two families<sup>1</sup> the Lord has chosen, and both he has cast off, so that they despise my own people, and no longer count it a nation. For this is the divine answer: Laws if I have made none for day and night, for heaven and earth no ordinances prescribed, then let it be thought as that I mean to cast Israel away, to depose the line of David from its leadership over all who spring from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Trust me, their days shall be reversed, their lot shall be joined.

## CHAPTER 34

THE word of the Lord came to Jeremiah at the time when King Nabuchodonosor of Babylon, at the head of his own army, with many king-  
doms and peoples to aid him, besieged was up Jerusalem and its daughter  
cities. This was the message sent by the Lord God of Israel: Go and  
warn Zedekiah, King of Judah, in my name that I mean to hand over this  
city to the Babylonian king, who will burn it to the ground. And add this  
tales: Thou thyself wilt not escape from him; they will catch thee, run  
enough, and hand thee over to him; thou and the king of Babylon shall  
have speech together, man face to face, and to Babylon thou shalt go.  
Wouldst thou not listen, King Zedekiah of Judah, to the Lord's bidding?<sup>2</sup>  
Hid by the sword, he tells thee, thou shouldst not, possible thy death  
should be, and they should make such burning for thee as they made for  
thy fathers that reigned before thee, raise such cries of lamentation, Alas,  
what a king was this! This is my promise to thee, the Lord says. All  
this King Zedekiah of Judah must hear from the prophet Jeremiah, there in  
Jerusalem; and still the Babylonian army pressed hard on the city, and  
on those other cities of Judah that were left, Lachish and Azekah, the rest of  
the fortified cities had already been taken.

Here is another message the Lord entrusted to Jeremiah, and this was  
the meaning of it. King Zedekiah had bound the citizens of Jerusalem by a  
covenant; all alike were to set free their slaves and handmaids that were  
of Hebrew blood; would they play the master to their own Jewish kin-  
folk? On hearing the proclamation, nobles and common people alike had  
agreed to release slave and handmaid, and exempt them from all service

<sup>1</sup> Probably the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; they may, however, be Israel and Judah, or Levi and David (mentioned in the foregoing verse), or Jacob and David (as were of Israel).

<sup>2</sup> This might be translated, "Listen to a message from the Lord, King Zedekiah of Judah." But probably the promise made in the rest of the verse is meant to be restricted upon Zedekiah's obeying the Lord (and coming to listen the message).

11 heretofore; and this they did obediently enough; but afterwards they changed their minds, hated their officers and women, and released them no slavery once again. Then it was word came from the Lord to Jeremiah, 12 and thus the slaves strange ran: 'Woe does the Lord God of Israel? I made a covenant with your fathers, when I rescued them from their 13 place of bondage in Egypt. Seven years up, every slave sold in bondage to his fellow Hebrew must go free six years of service, and that release. 14 Your fathers would not listen, turned a deaf ear to me; but you, to-day, have thought better of it, and done my will, proclaiming liberty to your fellow-countrymen; you have sworn it in my presence, in the house that 15 is the shrine of my name. And then you went back, and dragged my name in the dust! You would claim them afresh, men and women servants you had set free, now their own masters; they must be your servants and handmaids still.

16 'This sentence, then, the Lord pronounced: You have not obeyed me, by granting freedom to your own brethren and neighbours, and have in the freedom I mean to grant you in return; freedom of the priest, freedom of the families, freedom of the profession! A base I will make you in all the 17 kingdoms of earth. I will have no more of them, the men who transgress my covenant, have no respect for the agreement they made in my own presence, the oath they set in two and nullified between the slaves of it, 18 nobles of Juda and Jerusalem, chamberlains and pilots, and all the common folk that passed between slave and slave. I mean to give them up 19 into the hands of enemies that are sworn upon their lives; trial is set in and here on earth shall peer upon the cunning of slaves. Salscias, king of Juda, and his nation, shall fall into the hands of pharaoh enemies, the 20 series of Babylon, that now give you a respite. These, at my command, shall march on this city again, lay siege to it, and capture it, and burn it to the ground; and I will make the wilderness of Juda into a desert, even a land so dwell there.

## CHAPTER 35

1 **I**N the reign of Jechiel son Jachin, word came to Jeremiah from the Lord, Go, make thyself acquainted with the men of Reuben's clan; I would have thee restrain them to eat of the treasury income at the 2 temple, and there set wine before them. So Jeremiah, son of Jeremia, son of Habanias was my guest, with his brethren and his sons and the whole 3 Reubenite clan: into the temple I brought them, to the apartment of Hanan's sons, that came down from Oziel's servant Jopedaias. It was there 4 to the apartment of the door-keeper, Micaiah the son of Selchun. Then I

set a bowl and goblet of wine before the men of Rechabab's clan, and bade them drink, but drink wise they would not. Our father Josiah, said they, the son of Rechab gave us a rule to live by. Wine neither we should drink, nor any one of ours in perpetuity; no house build, no crops sow, no vineyard plant or possess, in tents we were to live all our days, and long those days should last in this land that was none of ours. As my father Josiah son of Rechab bade us live, so live we, so our wives and sons and daughters live, drinking no wine at any time. Hence we build none so dwell in, vineyards and fields and crops have none; our dwellers we consult, true to every command of our father Josiah. It was only when king Nabuchodonosor of Babylon marched against us that we were fain to take shelter in Jerusalem from chances of Chaldean and Syrian, that is why we make our abode in Jerusalem.

And now the Lord's word came to Jeremiah. A message from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Go and tell all the men of Jude, all the citizens of Jerusalem. Great marvel it is, the Lord says, you are so utterly wild, and will not heed my bidding. Here is Josiah's son of Rechab: will he have his sons drink no wine, and his word hold; wine they drink none to this day, the love of their father's rule; and I, that word only is your doom, can win no obedience. Early I sent them to your doors, the prophets that were servants of mine, bidding you come back from your straying, and shape your thoughts aright; have recourse no longer to the worship of alien gods, if you would dwell securely in this land, my gift to you and to your fathers; but you gave me neither heed nor listening. So loyal as the Rechabites to the commands of their father Josiah, and my people so disobedient! I mean, then, says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to punish the citizens of Jerusalem for warnings unheeded, for calls refused, with all the punishments I have threatened. To the clan of Bechabab Jeremiah gave this message from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: For your obedience to your father Josiah, his precept remembered and his duty done, he, the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, promises that in this line of Bechabab and Josiah, long as time lasts, shall never wear a penalty to do his service.

## CHAPTER 34

**I**N the fourth year of Josiah's son Jehoiach, the Lord gave Jeremiah this commandment: Get thyself a scroll, and make down on it all the warnings I have uttered against Israel and Juda, and against the other nations of the world, ever since I first spoke to thee under king Josiah. Mayhap, when the men of Juda hear of all the mischief I warn to do them, they

will leave off their staving in false paths, and so I will overthrow the guilt of their wrong-doing.

- 4 So Jeremiah said to Baruch the son of Neriah the Lord's utterances.  
 5 Every one, Jeremiah exhorted and Baruch wrote down on the scroll. And  
 now Jeremiah had no reward for him: I must keep my house, said he, go  
 6 into the Lord's temple I may not.<sup>1</sup> Do thou, on a fasting day, go thou  
 learned, and read out some of the divine utterances I have dictated to  
 7 thee, in the temple itself, for all the citizens to hear, and all the sons of  
 8 Juda besides, that have come in from their several sovereignties. Maybe  
 their intervention will find its way into the Lord's presence, maybe they  
 will leave off their staving in false paths, here are grimey chosen from  
 9 the Lord of angry vinegrower against his people. So it was Baruch son of  
 10 Neriah, but in fulfilment of Jeremiah's command, that took the scroll and  
 11 read out, there in the Lord's house, the Lord's message. It was the sixth  
 month, in the fifth year of Josiah's son Jeichin, when they proclaimed a  
 fast, that was to be kept in the Lord's presence by all the citizens and all  
 12 who had come in from the other towns of Juda. And those in the Lord's  
 house, from the apartment of Gemarias, whose father, Saphan, had once  
 been secretary, in the upper court, close by the entry of the new temple  
 13 gate, Baruch read out Jeremiah's book of warning. No line he read of the  
 divine utterance but had an eager listener in Gemarias' son Azbana,  
 14 who thereupon went down to the secretary's room, where he found all the  
 nobles assembled. There was the secretary, Elishama; there were Dathan  
 son of Semeias, and Elanath son of Achobor, and Gemarias son of  
 Saphan, and Sedechia son of Harumias, and all the nobles in general.  
 15 To these Azbana repeated all he had heard Baruch read out from the  
 16 scroll in public; and Juthi, son of Mathania, son of Selmias, son of  
 Cothi, was next to be named to Baruch in the name of all present. Come  
 17 shikar he said, and bring the scroll he had read thus publicly with him.  
 So it was Baruch, son of Neriah, that came before them, and the scroll  
 18 with him; they took him to read, and read it aloud to them, so read it  
 19 he did. When all the reading was over, they looked such as ever in  
 amazement, and told Baruch all this must be brought to the king's ear.  
 20 Then they asked, How comes it that these are the words of Jeremiah, and  
 21 yet of thy writing? Why, said he, Jeremiah gave them over, so if he were  
 reading them aloud, and I sat by with paper and ink to write them down.  
 22 Go two of them, they told him, thou and Jeremiah with thee, and be sure  
 you know where to find you.  
 23 Then they made their way into the palace-court to find the king, leaving  
 the book there in the secretary's room. When they had brought their  
 24 news to his hearing, the king would have Juthi fetch the book itself from

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Neh. 4:4.



Eliakim's room, which he did, and read it out for the king to hear, and all the courtiers that stood about him. Since it was the ninth month, Joachim was in his winter parlour, and a brazier of coals in front of him; and when as Joad had read but three columns or four, he took his pen-knife and began cutting the scroll into pieces, which he threw on to the brazier until the whole book had perished in the flames. King and courtiers listened to all these warnings, yet feared they were, so rent their clothes; and although Elnathan, Delaiah and Gemarias would have prevented Joachim from burning the scroll, he would not listen to them. Jozabab son of Anathoth,<sup>1</sup> as Saraias son of Haniel, and Selemlas son of Abdeel were bidden to smother the persons of the scribe Baruch and the prophet Jeremiah; but the Lord kept them in safe hiding.

And this was the Lord's word to the prophet Jeremiah, when the king had burnt the scroll, and with it all the utterances he had dictated to Baruch: Get thee another scroll, and write down on it whatever was contained in the one king Joachim burnt. And so king Joachim gave this message from the Lord: Turn back and chide prophet, if thou wilt, for warning thee that the king of Babylon will come back with all speed, and lay this country waste, leaving neither man nor beast to dwell in it. But this is the Lord's doom against king Joachim of Juda: No son of his shall follow him on the throne of David; his body shall be cast away in the open, to hear the day's heat and the night frost. With guile of his, with guile of a household and court of his, I will visit in full all my unheeded threats against Jerusalem and Juda shall be made good.

So Jeremiah must get Baruch another scroll to write on, and all the contents of the book Joachim burnt must be dictated anew; much more was added besides to enlarge it.

## CHAPTER 37

**I**N place of Jucharias, that was son to Joachim, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon would have Sedecias, another of Josias' sons, mount the throne of Juda; but no hand would the new king give, nor his courtiers, nor his subjects, to the warnings uttered in the Lord's name by the prophet Jeremiah. To him the king sent eunuchs, Juchal the son of Selemlas and the priest Sophonias, son of Maasia, bidding him pray to the Lord their God for the common welfare. Jeremiah was still free to come and go as he pleased among his fellow-citizens; they had not yet imprisoned him.

<sup>1</sup> "The son of Anathoth" the Hebrew text is probably better understood as meaning "the king's son," that is, a prince of the royal blood.

At this time, Pharaoh's army was on the march, advancing from the Egyptian frontier, and the Chaldeans, this time reaching them, had misled the kings of Jerusalem. So the Lord's word came to the prophet Jeremiah: Take back this message from the Lord God of Israel to the king who sent you to consult me. Back home to Egypt it shall march, the army of Pharaoh that has come out in your support; whereas the Chaldeans will remain to the attack, will capture this city and burn it to the ground. Never cheat yourselves with the hope that the enemy will march away and leave you alone; march away they will not, the Lord says. Law though you should lay every Chaldean that takes the field against you, save but some few wounded, those wounded men shall rise up from their staves, and burn this city to the ground notwithstanding.

And now, while Pharaoh still threatened, and the Chaldeans had misled the kings, Jeremiah took occasion to leave Jerusalem and make his way to Benjamin, where he must divide up some property in the presence of his fellow-citizens. When he reached the Benjamin gate, the officer whose name it was to custom guard there, Jerim, the son of Solomon, the son of Hanneas, put the prophet under arrest, under the charge of deserting to the Chaldeans. In vain did Jeremiah protest, What, I desert to the Chaldeans? There is no truth in it! Jerim led him away into the presence of all the nobles, and there, in a cage, first had him beaten, then confined him in the house of the secretary, Jonathan, who had charge of the prisoners at this time. So came Jeremiah to a dungeon cell, and long remained there.

It was king Sedechias who released him, sending for him and questioning him privately in the palace. Has the Lord any message for me? he asked. Yea, said Jeremiah, that thou shalt be as the mercy of Nabuchodonosor. Then he asked the king, What wrong have I done to thee, to thy courtiers or thy subjects, that thou hast thrown me into prison? Told me, how have they sped, those prophets of yours who forbade that the king of Babylon should never reach you, never invade this land of yours? Listen to me, my lord king, I earnest thee, and look favourably on my suit. Do not send me back to the house of your secretary Jonathan, for there I needs must die! So king Sedechias had him confined in the court without, and given a loaf of bread each day, with seasoning added,<sup>1</sup> as long as bread there should be in the city. And there Jeremiah was left, among the prisoners in the courtyard.

<sup>1</sup> With seasoning added; according to the Hebrew text. From the Secret of the Sakers.

## CHAPTER 38

**STILL** Jeremiah would speak out before all the people; and among  
 Scribes who listened to him were Saphan son of Mathan, Gedaliah  
 son of Phasai, Jehiel son of Sciama, and Pashur son of Michai.  
 This message they heard him proclaim from the Lord: To remain in this  
 city means death by sword, famine and pestilence; go over to the Chalde-  
 ans, you shall have your lives for goodness, and be spared. And this:  
 For this, the city will fall into the hands of the king of Babylon, by  
 right of capture. And they urged the king, these nobles, to make an  
 end of him: He goes about, said they, to weaken the resolve of the gar-  
 rison, and of the people at large, by talking in this fashion; there is neither  
 here, nor good will. He is at your disposal, king Zedekiah answered: King  
 is more wary of himself you. So they had their way with Jeremiah; he should  
 be left helpless in the court of Mithai the son of Anathai,<sup>1</sup> there in the  
 court where the prisoners were kept. Late the chamber boys lowered him  
 with ropes; there was no water in it now, only mire, and late the mire he  
 sank.

But there was an Ethiopian chamberlain at the court, named Abden-  
 ne<sup>2</sup> Jeai, that heard how Jeremiah had been let down into the cistern; and as  
 the king was sitting at the Benjamin Gate, this Abdennech came out:  
 from the palace and remonstrated with him. My lord king, he said, here  
 is foul wrong done to the prophet Jeremiah; they have let him down into  
 a cistern, where he will die of hunger, each lack of bread there is in the  
 city. Why then, said the king to Abdennech the Ethiopian, take thirty<sup>3</sup> or  
 men with thee, and rescue Jeremiah from the cistern while there is yet  
 life in him. So Abdennech took the men with him, made his way late in  
 the palace, beneath the more-chamber, took old rags and cloths that lay  
 mouldering there, and let them down by ropes to Jeremiah in the cistern.  
 Here he told things and considering, the Ethiopian said to Jeremiah, how  
 thou mightest put those under thy arms-pits, and the ropes under those  
 again. Jeremiah obeyed, and they pulled him up by the ropes till he was in  
 clay of the cistern; but the courtyard was his prison still.

Thus king Zedekiah would have the prophet come to him by the third  
 door of the palace, the one that leads to the temple. I have a question to  
 ask thee, he said to Jeremiah; hide nothing from me. Whiz, Jeremiah  
 answered, if I tell thee what I know, thou wilt but kill me, and if I give  
 thee advice, thou wilt not heed it. But king Zedekiah took a secret oath,  
 as the Lord is a living God, the Lord will give us this month we breathe,

<sup>1</sup> The name is JEAI.

<sup>2</sup> Some suspect the word "thirty" of being a scribe's mistake for "three."

17 day than I will not, nor hand thee over to thy mortal enemies. Thereupon  
 Jeremiah told him a message from the Lord, the God of Israel: Go now and  
 give thyself up to Nabuchodonassar's chiefs, and thy life shall be safe,  
 nor shall there be any burning of the city; thou and thine shall be spared.  
 18 If thou dost not give thyself up to them, then the Chaldeans shall gain  
 mastery of the city and burn it to the ground, and for thyself there is no  
 19 escaping them. Yet my heart misgives me, Sedechias said him, over the  
 Jews that have already made their submission; when if I should be handed  
 20 over to these, and they wreak their spite on me? That shall not be, Jer-  
 emias answered. Give heed, only give heed, to this message from the Lord  
 21 I bear thee, so thou shalt speed well, and life be granted thee. Refuse to  
 22 yield, and here is the doom he has made known to me. Never a woman  
 that is left in the palace of the kings of Judea but shall be spoil for the  
 chiefs of the king of Babylon! And as they are led away, this shall be  
 their lament: Fable friend failed thee, and had the bones of thee; for the  
 23 is the treacherous woman has left thee! Wife of thine and son of thine  
 led away into the enemy's camp, and thou thyself powerless to escape;  
 thyself the king of Babylon shall take prisoner, and burn the city to the  
 ground.  
 24 On peril of thy life, King Sedechias warned him, let some hear what has  
 25 passed between us. If it reach the ears of the nobles that we have had  
 speech together, and they bid thee repeat what thou seest, or what said  
 the King, hiding nothing as thou holdest thy life dear, then be this thy  
 26 answer, Wily, I pleaded my suit with the king's grace that he would not  
 27 have me come back to Jordan's house, or die there! Come and ask him  
 they did, and he answered as the king bade him; so with that they let him  
 28 be; nothing had been contrived. This imprisonment of Jeremiah in the  
 courtyard lasted until the taking of Jerusalem; for, says enough, Jeru-  
 salem was taken.

## CHAPTER 39

**S**EDechias had been reigning for eight years and ten months in Judea  
 when Nabuchodonassar king of Babylon led his armies to the siege of  
 1 Jerusalem; in the eleventh year, on the fifth day of the fourth month,  
 2 the gates were thrown open to him. In they marched, (Nérégel, Sarais,  
 Samgar-matir, Samachin, Rabares, (Nérégel, Sarais), and Babonig;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Some authors hold that Jeremiah had in fact repeated, on this occasion, the appeal made in 37.29 above otherwise he would not have been induced to accept the king's proposals.

<sup>2</sup> Some of these names appear to have been repeated by a copyist's error. Rabares and Babonig are probably titles, not names.

and all the king of Babylon's other chiefsaim, and occupied the central gate. Sedecias king of Judea and all his warriors fled at their approach, leaving the city at dead of night by way of the royal garden and the gate between the two walls; it was the desert road they took when they left it. The Chaldean army went in pursuit, and overtook Sedecias in the open plain of Jericho; captured him, and brought him before Nabuchodonosor at Belsatha, in the fourth country; and there sentence was pronounced on him. Slain by the king of Babylon were all the nobles of Judea; and as for Sedecias himself, his eyes were put out, and he was carried off, loaded with chains, to Babylon. King's palace and poor man's house the Chaldeans burnt to the ground, and threw down the walls of Jerusalem in ruins. All the men who survived, defenders and destroyers alike, were carried off by Nabuzardan, the captain of the royal bodyguard, to Babylon. He left none except the poorest of the inhabitants, landless men, in Judea, who found themselves perished, that day, with vineyards and olives of their own.

This Nabuzardan, captain of the royal bodyguard, had spoken from king Nabuchodonosor about Jeremiah: Take him under thy loving charge, said he, and let him have what cheer he will. So here were Nabuzardan, captain of the royal bodyguard, and Naburethan, and Rabshares, and Harpag, and Serzer, and Rabmag, and all the king of Babylon's great chiefsaim, sending out to free Jeremiah from his prison in the courtyard. And they entrusted him to the care of Gedekias, son of Ahikam; with him Jeremiah should dwell, and make his home among his own people.

While he was still in the courtyard prison, Jeremiah had been entrusted with a message from the Lord: for the Ethiopian, Ahazerebda: All thy doors against this city, says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, I mean or fulfill, has it is and not blessing, and thou shalt live to see it; but so as thou I will give safety, the Lord says. Never shall I decide for have the mastery, when I am there to deliver thee; thou art marked out for safety, is that thou put thy confidence in me, the Lord says.

## CHAPTER 40

TO Jeremiah the word of the Lord will come, after the captain of the bodyguard, Naburethan, had set him at liberty. This happened at Ramah, where he was singled out, still in chains, among the prisoners from Jerusalem and Jude who went on their way to Babylon. As he took him apart from the rest, the captain of the bodyguard said to him, With whom

1 by the Lord thy God threatened this land of thine, and calamity be has  
brought upon it; his threat is fulfilled. What gale was this, to fulfill the  
c Lord's edicts? And here is the issue. From thy hands I have struck the  
claves, as thou wast; bear me company, if thou wilt, in Babylon, and I  
will take good care of thee; if thou wilt not go my way, then abide where  
thou art. The whole land is at thy disposal, and thou art free to take thy  
d own path; none may contrain thee to go with me. Says the Godolias, son  
of Ahicam, son of Saphan, that is entrusted by the king of Babylon with  
the charge of all Judah; dwell with him if thou wilt, here among thy own  
people, or where thou hast a mind beside thee. And with that, the captain  
of the bodyguard furnished him with provisions, and made him a present  
e besides, and so took leave of him. It was to Godolias son of Ahicam, at  
Masphah, that Jeremiah repaired, and dwelt with him among the remnant  
of the land's inhabitants.

7 Men, women, and children, to Godolias son of Ahicam the king of  
Babylon entrusted them, all these landless folk who had not been carried  
off into exile. And when the news of this appointment reached the army  
f of Chaldeans, scattered hays and there with their men, they called to Godolias  
at Masphah. Here were Imanuel, son of Michael, Johanan and Jona-  
than, sons of Carai, Sarcas, son of Thersibeamoth, the sons of Cybi from  
Nephtali, and Jeremia sons, of Maschathi, all with bows at their backs.

8 To these, chiefs and men alike, Godolias son of Ahicam son of Saphan  
took an oath. They need have no fear of living under Chaldean rule  
for those results in the country as the king of Babylon's words, and all  
i should go well with them. I am living here in Masphah, said he, to take  
the orders sent me from Chaldeas; it is for you to gather in vintage and  
harvest and olive-yield, each of you abiding in the city he now occupies.

10 There were other Jews living in Moab, Ammon, Edom, and the coun-  
tries round about; these, when they heard that the king of Babylon had  
left a remnant in Judah, and put Godolias, son of Ahicam, son of Saphan,  
11 in charge of them, came back from the countries where they had taken  
refuge into Judah, came to Godolias at Masphah; and abundant was the  
store they brought in, of gapes and grain both.

12 And now, at Masphah, Godolias was visited by Johanan son of Carai,  
13 and the other Chaldeans from the countryside, with this warning: We  
have information that Imanuel, son of Michael, was sent here by Baalis,  
king of Ammon, to take thy life. But Godolias would not believe it.  
14 When Johanan was at Masphah he took Godolias aside; Let me go and  
make away with Imanuel secretly, he urged; take he thy life, all the Jews  
that have rallied about thee will be scattered again, and Judah have a rem-  
nant no more. But Godolias would have none of it; Nay, said he to  
Johanan, have off thy purpose; it is but a false report thou tellest me  
concerning Imanuel.

## CHAPTER 41

THE seventh month had come, and now Israhel, son of Nathanias, son of Elnathan, one of the royal princes and the king's vessels,<sup>1</sup> came with ten followers to Maphath, where Godolias was, and at Maphath they sat at table together. Then and then, at the sword's point, Israhel and his ten men put Godolias to death. So perished Godolias, son of Ahikam, son of Saphan, that held the king of Babylon's warrant to rule the country. Such Jews as were with Godolias at Maphath, such Chaldean soldiers as he found there, Israhel dispatched at the same time. And the day after Godolias' murder, before the news of it was out, came eight pilgrims from Sichem, Silo, and Samaria, beard shaven, garments rent, in mourning all of them, with bloodless offerings and incense for the Lord's temple. Out came Israhel son of Nathanias from Maphath to meet them, and kept away as he went; Welcome, said he, from Godolias son of Ahikam! And when they had reached the middle of the town, just by the church,<sup>2</sup> they were slain by Israhel and his men; all except son of them, who pleaded for their lives and told Israhel they had a basket of wheat, barley, oil and honey hidden away under their beds; these were spared the face of the rent. When he slew the companions of Godolias, Israhel had thrown their bodies into the church; it was one which king Aza had made to defile the place against Bawa, king of Israel; now, Israhel's massacre filled it to the brim.

Then there was no longer a remnant at Maphath; the king's daughters, as and all the other folk left there by Nebuchadnezzar under the care of Godolias, Israhel took off with him as his captives, and so would have marched away into the Ammonite country. But Johanan, son of Kareah, and the other many chieftains that were on his side, no sooner heard the ill news of what Israhel had done than they mustered all their men to give him a battle, and caught up with him at the pool of Gabaon. A welcome sight it was to Israhel's company, when they saw Johanan, son of Kareah, and the other chieftains approaching; back went all the prisoners to Manasse's place, and there in their lot with Johanan's people. Israhel fled at the sight of him, and reached the Ammonite country with only eight men at his back.

Johanan and his fellow chieftains would not leave at Maphath this remnant they had rescued from Israhel after the murder of Godolias, all

<sup>1</sup> This name is the original, presumably by a scribe's error, as if it meant the Israhel was accompanied by some of the king's vessels.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'into the middle of the stream,' a phrase which can hardly have been inserted.

the fighting men, the women and children, the eunuchs, who had returned with them from Babylon. They went off and made their home for a time at Gittaim, near Bethlehem, thinking to take refuge in Egypt from the vengeance of the Chaldeans. From there they hasteneth to come, now that Immanuel son of Nethaniah had murdered Gedaliah son of Ahikam, the king of Babylon's own representative in Judah.

## CHAPTER 42

AND now all the army chieftains, Johanan son of Karek and Jonathan son of Osnai and their followers, high and low, came to consult Jeremiah. Look kindly, they said, on our request; we would have thee intercede with the Lord thy God for this poor remnant, left as few as a handful, as thou seest. Whither go we? What shift make we? Please it the Lord thy God to make all this known to us. And the prophet Jeremiah said, Your request shall be granted. Pray I will, as you bid me pray, to the Lord your God, and his answer you shall hear in full, so word kept hidden from you. And this promise they made on their part: The Lord himself bear witness against us, swearing and unfeigning, if we are not true to every word of that message the Lord sends us through thy mouth. Be it for weal or woe, it is the voice of the Lord our God; to him lies thy errand, and him we will obey; heed we the commands of the Lord our God, nothing can go amiss.

Ten days passed, and then the Lord's word came to Jeremiah: Johanan son of Karek he summoned to him, and all the army chieftains, and their followers, high and low, and thus spoke to them: A message to you from the Lord, the God of Israel: To him I went on your errand, and laid your prayers before him. Wait on quietly, he says, in this land of yours, and all shall be building now, not destroying, all shall be planting now, not uprooting: enough is the calamity I have brought on you. What, does the king of Babylon share you with his sword? Of him have no fear; danger from him is none, the Lord says, when I am at your side to protect you, and deliver you from his power. I will take pity on you now; only pity shall you find, and on your native soil as visiting home.

But if you refuse to make it your home, if you disobey the divine command; if you are heard crying, Not To Egypt! Then we will dwell, where are no signs of bloodshed, no sound of trumpet-call, no famine to be endured: slain, but of the Jews, slain to this, the Lord's message! This he tells you, he, the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: If you turn your faces towards Egypt, and thither repair to find a refuge, the sword you dread shall overtake you, there in Egypt, the furies that haunt you



shall be with you still, there in Egypt, and in Egypt you shall die! None is that name his face towards Egypt for refuge, but reward as thine is as persistence shall be the mocking of him; such calamity I mean to bring on it as none shall survive, none shall escape. Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Go you to Egypt, my angry vengeance shall blaze out against you so late, that when you die; once at Jerusalem peace shall be a name of irritation and horror, a name to curse by and to revile, and this land you shall never see more. Last of the Jews, this is the Lord's message: Go to Egypt you must not. Bear me witness, all of you, that I have given you warning warning this day. But no, you did not heed my warning; you would have me do your errand to the Lord our God, and to you promised, Pray to the Lord our God for us, make known to us whatever is his divine will, and it shall be done; but now I have told it to you, and where is your obedience to that divine will, to the message he bade me deliver to you? Here then is full warning that the land where as you mean to take refuge shall be the mocking of you, by war and famine and pestilence.

## CHAPTER 43

SUCH was the errand upon which the Lord now sent Jeremiah to his people. And when Jeremiah had delivered all this message to them from the Lord their God, Azarias, son of Osai, contravened him; a Johanan, too, the son of Kareah, and the other malcontents<sup>1</sup> held the same language. Then here, they said, warrant thou hast come from the Lord our God as prevent us taking refuge in Egypt; it is Baruch, son of Nerias, who was first of us, thinking us better to go to the Chaldeans, and have us put to death, or carried away to Babylon. Thus Johanan, son of Kareah, with the army chieftains and all their men in his support, refused to obey the Lord's bidding and remain where they were in Judah. He and his fellow chieftains took all the remaining Jews away with them; some of these had been scattered in distant parts, but had now come back to live at home with their wives and children; others, the king's daughters among them, had been nurtured by Nabuzardan, the captain of the body-guard, at Gedaliah, son of Ahikam, son of Saphan, that had the prophet Jeremiah and Baruch son of Nerias at his side. With all these at their back they crossed the Egyptian frontier, in defiance of the Lord's bidding, and made their way to Taphnis.

And at Taphnis the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: 'Take a load

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'and all the proud men, saying.' The text is probably corrupt.

of great men with thee, and go as the eagle<sup>a</sup> under the birds' wing by the  
 gate of Pharaoh's palace in Taphnis; these bury thee, with Jewish rites by  
 10 or near thee. And this message thou shalt give them from the Lord of  
 hosts, the God of Israel: I mean to raise men up that is my servant, Nibu-  
 chadnezzar king of Babylon, and set up a throne for him on these bound-  
 15 aries; where these stones lie buried, his army shall rise. He it is that  
 shall come and down the Egyptians; whom the plague becometh, to the  
 20 plague, whom exile, to exile, whom the sword, to the sword. The idols  
 of Egypt he shall carry away into banishment, first setting light to their  
 temples and burning them down. Lightly as doth a dove fly, he shall  
 25 have himself with sovereignty over his people, and unobscured go his  
 way, leaving in place the stones that when Egypt's sun-temple, the  
 shrine of Egypt burning to the ground.

## CHAPTER 44

**H**ERE is a message that was sent through Jeremiah to all the Jews  
 living in Egypt, whether in Migfatim or Taphnis or Memphis or the  
 5 Pharaoh country: Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: You have seen  
 for yourselves what calamity I brought on Jerusalem and the cities of  
 10 Judea, how this day they are empty of inhabitants. By their own guilt  
 they earned it, when they defiled my vineyard, counting the seedlings  
 and the worship of alien gods they had sown known evil then, they and  
 15 you and your fathers alike. Early to your doors I sent those prophets that  
 were servants of mine, bidding you leave off such, find deliverance of yours,  
 20 things even harmful to me; but hard and haughty they gave no heed, still  
 went away, to alien gods still made sacrifice. At last my angry vengeance  
 flared up, and in such a fire is the worship of Judea, in the midst of  
 25 Jerusalem, as has left them, this day, a barren wilderness. And now, says  
 the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, what of yourselves? Would you  
 force a noose round your own necks, ever death for man and woman,  
 30 cold and weeping, till remnant of Judea shall be none? For divine must  
 I have images of your own making? Will you sacrifice to gods not yours,  
 then in Egypt? Why would you take refuge there, to your own making,  
 to be a name all the world should curse by and revile?

35 Have you forgotten them, all deeds done in your fathers' days by king  
 and queen, by man and wife, throughout Judea and the streets of Jeru-  
 40 salem? Alas, to this day there is no attempting; no dread of me, nothing  
 by the divine law, by the rule I held up for a pattern to you and to your  
 45 fathers! Thus, then, he threatens you, he, the Lord of hosts, the God of

<sup>a</sup> The eagle's talon represents a scourge in the Hebrew which is not found else-  
 where. Modern commentators give the rendering "scourge."

Israel: It is my doom you shall see hereafterward, the whole of Judah shall be cut away. The remnant that looked to find a refuge in Egypt, in Egypt ye shall perish, sword and famine their undoing, sword and famine for all of them, high and low. Thine shall be a curse of execration and of wonder, a name to curse by and to scorn. Sword, famine and pestilence, as I am called Jerusalem to account, and so I will call Egypt to account: for these are Jewish castaways that have taken refuge in Egypt: there is no escaping with their lives, no returning to Judah, home of their sages' desires; only fugitives shall return.

Jeremias did not go unanswered; there were men there who knew well as their wives made offering to alien gods, of the women themselves, many were standing by. They had but one thought, all these evils that were making their home at Pharaoh in Egypt: Ay, so the Lord bids thee tell us so, but we will have none of it. Sworn we are, and by that oath we mean it to stand, that we will do sacrifice to the queen of heaven, and make offering of cakes to her, as we ever did, we and our fathers, kings and rulers of ours, in the townships of Judah and in Jerusalem streets; heed we had in those days to our heart's content, and all went well with us; bad times we never saw. It is only since we left off doing sacrifice to the queen of heaven, and paid tribute of cakes no more, that all is woe and want, sword wasting us and famine. Sacrifice when we women make to the queen of heaven, and pour libations to her, he saw our men-folk know in whose honour cake is made, and wine is poured!

But Jeremias turned upon them all, men and women alike, all that had so given him his answer. Nay, said he, when you did sacrifice all through to Judah and in Jerusalem streets, and your fathers before you, king and noble and plain citizen, he saw the Lord was blessing you, and marked it well. It was when the Lord could bear no longer with false rites and foul deeds so of yours, that your land became a wilderness, a thing of wonder, a name to curse by, a land empty of inhabitants, as it is this day. It was because ye were sacrificed, in the Lord's despite, to false gods, because you would not obey him, would not follow law and decree and ordinance of his, that all the calamity of these times has come upon you.

This, too, Jeremias said to the crowd about him, and to their women-folk besides: Jews of Egypt, listen to the message he sends you, he, the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel. So you will be as good as your word; ye sacrifice and libation you have vowed to the queen of heaven, and away pay it; all is accomplished, will he turned him not! Then listen, Jews of Egypt, to the doom which the Lord pronounces. By the honour of my own name I have sworn it, the Lord says, never Jew shall be heard more taking his oath by the living God, in all this land of Egypt! For woe, or yet for woe, these eyes of mine shall watch over them, all sword and famine have done their work, and Jew in Egypt is none. To Judah from us

Egypt they shall return, such few as have escaped the sword's point, and  
 the remnant that took refuge here shall leave in their coat whose prophesy  
 was fulfilled, theirs of mine. Here is a sign I mean to give you, the Lord  
 says, here in this land, is proof that my threats shall be accomplished.  
 Thus says the Lord I, that gave up Sennacherib of Judah to Nebuchodonosor,  
 his mortal enemy, will give up to his mortal enemies yonder Pharaoh,<sup>1</sup>  
 that is now Pharo in Egypt.

## CHAPTER 45

WHEN Baruch, son of Nerias, had written down the words dictated  
 to him by Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Joachim's reign in Judah,  
 this comfort Jeremiah gave him? A message from the Lord, the God of  
 Israel, to thee, Baruch! Woe is thee, heavy is thy heart; sorrow upon  
 sorrow the Lord gives thee, and sorrows thou canst find none. Yet this  
 message the Lord has for thee: Here am I destroying what my own hands  
 built, uprooting what my own hands planted; and for thee must it be all  
 prizes? For prizes never lack thee; enough for thee that, go thou where  
 thou wilt, safe-conduct of thy life I am granting thee.

## CHAPTER 46

HERE follows the doom which the Lord pronounced to the prophet  
 Jeremiah against the nations of the world. And first against Egypt,  
 whose army stood at Chazarcas, by the river Euphrates, under its king  
 Pharo Necho, and there was defeated by Nebuchodonosor King of  
 Babylon, in the fourth year of Joachim's reign over Judah, that was son to  
 Josiah.

Beckler, there, and shield; march we to battle. Yoke need, and, horse-  
 men, mowing; stand to your ranks, belonour; scour lance, and don horse-  
 plait! What reines is? How be-wards turning their backs, how be great  
 warriors slay; yeth-well they die, and never a glance behind; perill is all  
 around, the Lord says. For the swift no escape, for the strong no pre-  
 vailing; there in the north, by Euphrates banks, they fall and fall!

Can it be a river that comes up in flood, richer are those of a flowing  
 torrent? Like river in flood, like flowing torrent marches Egypt to battle,  
 threatening to cover earth with its advance, devour city and citizen. Ag,  
 mount horse, alight and the chariot; way those for the warriors, Ethiop  
 and Libyan with their great shields, men of Lybia that ply bow and spear

<sup>1</sup> That is Apries, or Necho, deposed by Sennacherib in B.C. 609.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. ch. 38.

arrow as well! Alas, not yours the day; this day the Lord, the God of hosts, has chosen for his day of vengeance, when he will take toll of his enemies; fed and grieved his sword shall be, drink deep of men's blood, here, on Euphrates banks, the Lord, the God of hosts, will claim his sacrifice. Egypt, poor maid, to Gilead beside thee, to find balm for thy wounded Salve after salve thou wilt try in vain; there is no healing there. Thy shame has come to all men's ears, earth echoes with thy lament; a warrior turned upon warrior of thine for support, and they fell both together.

And thus the Lord prophesied to Jeremiah the coming of Nabuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and his victory over Egypt. Here is men for Egypt; try it in Magdalen, make the echoes of Memphis, in Taphnia tell it abroad! Stand to arms, make ready for battling thy border countries have fallen a prey to the sword already! Why have thy warriors rushed to away? Stand they could not, when the Lord was minded to overthrow them. Many he brought to earth; trampled they, man over his fellow, a crying out, Up, to men of our own race return we, to the land of our birth escape we from the invader's sword!

What name shall we give to Pharaoh? Call him, Dip of Battle at Last? Or by his own life he has won it, that King whose name is Jovi, God of a host; Pharaoh's conqueror is on the way, towering high as Thoth among the hills, as Carnal above the sea.

Poor maid of Egypt, an eagle's peak provide thee! A lonely wilderness in Memphis shall be, where none may dwell henceforward.

Flying soldiers of Egypt, a helter skelt and gracchit from the north as a gad-fly<sup>1</sup> shall come to trouble her rest. But those mercenaries of hays as that went to mend fire like bullets full-fed, see how they have mangled about and when flight all at once, come ready to stand his ground! The day has come when they are marked down for slaughter; they shall be called to account at last. Loud her voice shall rise above the clink of iron bronze,<sup>2</sup> now that the invader's army draws near, pitiless as woodmen that go a-hewing; forest is near so deep they shall not lay it bare, same as

<sup>1</sup> Literally, "Why has thy strong one been driven down?" On the Latin version, "become rotten". Some think there is an allusion to the god Apsu here, perhaps conspired by a false reading.

<sup>2</sup> See note on 25-28.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, "The oppressed: time has brought trouble." The sense of the Hebrew is probably "trouble has passed its appointed time," perhaps meaning that it is too late now to do anything about it.

<sup>4</sup> If "gad-fly" is the right rendering of a word not found elsewhere, it is impossible not to suspect a reference to the Great north of Is (popularly identified with the Egyptian goddess Isis). It was changed by Zoro into a helter and pursued by a gad-fly as the mate of Zoro's halcyon.

<sup>5</sup> Literally, "as if of iron." The Hebrew text gives "as if of a serpent."

- 14 *behold in the house-swarm. For Egypt, all shame and confusion, prey*  
*of the northern folk! The Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, has pro-*  
*nounced his doom: I mean to have a reckoning now with Anka of*  
*Thbes;¹ with Phara and Egypt, with all its gods and all its kings, with*  
*16 Phara and all who trust in Phara's aid. I mean to give them up into the*  
*hands of their mortal enemies, Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon and his*  
*vassals; then Egypt shall have rest, as Egypt did of old.*  
 17 *Have thou no fear, the Lord says, Jacob, that art my servant still; nor*  
*for Israel is danger brewing. From that day's evening of evil I mean to*  
*rescue thee, rescue those children of thine; Jacob shall return, and live*  
*18 at ease, every blessing shall enjoy, and enemies have none to fear. For*  
*thee art sworn, Jacob that art my servant, the Lord says; am I not as thy*  
*savior? Of all the lands to which I have dispersed thee I will take full wit,*  
*but none of thee: I would but chastise thee with due measures kept, but*  
*I should leave thee altogether acquitted.²*

## CHAPTER 47

**AND** thus does the Lord pronounced to the prophet Jeremiah  
 against the Philistines, before the defeat of Gaza by king Phara.

- 1 *"Waters rising in the north," the Lord says, a river that overflows its*  
*banks, covering earth and earth's increase, dry and cynical Land the*  
*12 cries everywhere, a whole world in lament, as the sound of armed hosts*  
*drives master, groans of choice and rattle of wheels; hordes hang hands,*  
*14 either for none has power a glance to spare. So comes the day when*  
*Philistia shall be plundered, all of it, Tyre and Sidon of all their defences*  
*shall be stripped; Philistia the Lord despoils, and all that is left of the*  
*16 island-fortress from Caphtan. Shorn heads in Gaza; Ascalon is silent*  
*now, silent all their valleys. Long with thou bear the marks of thy mount-*  
*18 ings! But thou, sword of the Lord! Back has thy scabbard, vain thyself,*  
*and need Nay, not how should it? It holds the Lord's warrent to smite*  
*Ascalon and the sea-board country; there he has made tryt with it.*

¹ The Latin version has read the name of the god Ankon as a common noun, 'ankonians', and, somewhat vaguely, identifies the area of He set with Thbes, but with Alexandria, which was founded two centuries after Jeremiah's date.

² *Jer. 27, 28. A repetition of 25.12, 13.*

³ The mention of the sword suggests that we are still dealing with the conquests of Nabuchodonosor. If so, the time-honouring of verse 1 must be regarded as having as a *foxtrot* value even before the invasion of Philistia by Phara Ncha. Jeremiah prophesied its invasion by Nabuchodonosor some years later.

## CHAPTER 48

AND thus to Moab speaks the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel. Alas for Moab, spoiled and shamed, for Caribthaim taken, the high fortress humbled, a prey to alarm! For Moab, some triumph; against Moab there are plens a-bruising. Away with it, a nation let it be no more! Silence for thee, a long silence; the sword is at thy heels. From Gilead the cry gets up, rich and ruin everywhere; Moab lies crushed, let Segor echo the cry! Weep they and wail, that drink the dews of Lotan; all the way down from Gilead their feet may hear it, the cry of desolation. Fly he must that would escape with life, stripped though he be as the desert Samaritan. Ill repayed that confidence in ramparts of thine, storm of doom; taken thou shalt be like the rest, and Chamos go into exile, all his priests and all his young chief's with him. Of all thy cities, none shall be safe from the spoiler's entry; wasted thy valleys shall be, swept bare the hill-sides; the Lord desecrates it. Woe: a woe! for Moab; in the flower of her pride she goes into exile, and all her cities lie desolate, none to dwell there.

Cursed the man who goes about the Lord's work gradually, nor with a blood stains his sword!

Since those first days of his, ever was Moab too sick; he, that knew not a smile, is like a wine that has curdled on its lees, never fermented; rung and rung off it were never lost; a dross is coming now, the Lord says, when as I mean to send certain stewards of mine that shall sit those jars; draw wine, drink goblets, and break far to pieces! Chamos will play Moab like, as Bethel played Israel false, when Israel trusted in its sanctuary. Ay, to boast on of your bravery, tell us you are warriors all! Yet Moab is laid a waste, its newships shatter, all the flower of its chivalry goes to their death; so that king doth so, whose name is Jereb, God of hosts. Not long is delayed, Moab's last hour runs on swift from his calamity. Moans with it him, you that are his neighbours, you that are his familiars; so woe: a red broken, a staff so fair.

Poor maid of Dibon, come down from thy splendour and sit on the as perched ground; the spoiler of Moab has soiled thy brightness, dismantled thy walls; poor maid of Arnon, by the supple finger and look around as thou; ask of the fugitives, How went the day? Alas, Moab's hope is lost; so Moab lies conquered. Loud be the cry of lament in Arnon, that talk of fields laid waste; down on the hill-country, on Helon, Jara, and a

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'give a blow.' The Hebrew word is generally rendered 'wing,' with 'bring' instead of 'blow'; in the second part of the verse, but the punctuation of this verse is doubtful.

10 Hapharoth, Dibon, Mabo, and Beth-Diblahaim, Carathaim, Beth-  
11 gamat, Bethmaron, Carboth, and Beroi, and all the cities of Moab, far and  
12 to near. Blasted now is that horn, the Lord says, crushed that strong arm!  
13 Senseless let him fall, that once for the divine power vaunted himself  
14 a man; a laughing-stock let him be, that once, vanquishing over his wine,  
15 clapped hands in derision to make a laughing-stock of Israel! An inter-  
16 loper thou didst call him, and now, for this (in speaking of wine, thyself  
17 a drunkard thou wast made!) Leave your cities, Mithmin, and take to the  
18 hills; make the dove your model, that ever at the convenient edge of nest  
19 will build her nest.

20 The heading of Moab has long been in our care,<sup>1</sup> as it was ever bound-  
21 ed; proud, successful, boastful Moab, with head so high in air! Well I  
22 know, the Lord says, those high pretensions of hers, that have no  
23 strength to surmount them, those dreams that never come true! So, from  
24 one end of Moab to the other, there is dole and dirge, wailing for doom,  
25 for the men behind those walls of hardwood brick. Jure hastens for doom,  
26 vineyard of Jethur, and with Jure I too will wail; thy thorns reached  
27 from Jure itself to the Dead Sea and beyond; now, harvest of thine and  
28 vintage of thine the spoiler has overthrown. From the garden-lands of Moab  
29 joy and triumph have died away; all the promises I have supplied of their  
30 wine, no vintage-wine, no treading the grapes as of old. The dirge goes  
31 up from Heshbon, from Minie and Jure goes up all the way from Segor  
32 to Gerasa, like the howling of heifer full-grown; food gone the waters of  
33 Nimrin. None will I leave in Moab, the Lord says, to worship at the  
34 high-places, or do sacrifice to its gods. For Moab my heart wells like the  
35 wailing of Sodom, wailing of Sodom for those high-walled cities of hers;  
36 too high she stood, and see, they lie in ruins. Every hand is shaken, every  
37 head shaven in mourning; with bound<sup>2</sup> hands men go, as doleful on their  
38 backs. Roof-top and street in Moab is gone but echoes with grief; I have  
39 cast Moab away, the Lord says, like a jar just standing.

40 Lament for Moab is defeat, bound hands for Moab's shame! A laugh-  
41 ing-stock it will be and a by-word for all its neighbours. An eagle's flight  
42 yonder conqueror has, the Lord says, and will sweep down on Moab too.  
43 Now Carioth<sup>3</sup> is lost, and all the strongholds taken; crowd to women's

<sup>1</sup> vs. 26, 27. The same here is very doubtful. "Interloper" (Jerome, " thief") the reference is perhaps to Israel's comparatively late arrival in Palestine.

<sup>2</sup> vs. 37-38. Most of these phrases are to be found, though some of them in a different form, in chs. 39, 48 of Isaiah. The simplest explanation seems to be, that both prophets, at the same time, wrote in certain appropriate lines from an older poem. The "walls of hardwood brick" and the "heifer full-grown" perhaps original proper names, Ch-Sodom and Babylon-Babylon.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Hebrew text "bound" (in sign of mourning).

<sup>3</sup> Or perhaps the Hebrew word should be read as a common noun, "cities."



heart in child-bearing are these warrior hearts; Moab, that set the Lord at defiance, shall be a people no more. Terror in heart of its people, the Lord says, trap and will behead them; from terror they flee, into trap a fall they; from the trap flee they, with shall smite them. Such shall be my year of reckoning with the men of Moab, the Lord says. From the rails as escaped, who turn to Heshbon for shelter? Helpless he stands, such a fire comes out from Heshbon, all Sion's capital shame, all cheek and head of blaspheming Moab are consumed. Alas, Moab, alas, people of a Chamosa, for thy undoing! Gone into exile now thy men and daughters? Yet a time shall come at last, the Lord says, when her lot shall be reversed.

Thus for the doom of Moab.

## CHAPTER 49

AND thus the Lord speaks to the Ammonites: Did Israel, then, leave no sons, no heirs to follow him? How comes it that Melchom boasts possession of Gad, and worshippers of his dwell in your cities? A time is coming, the Lord says, when Rabboth Ammon shall hear the din of fighting, and shall be thrown down in ruin; when her daughter rulers shall be burnt to the ground, and Israel, to save the divine promise, shall drive out the intruder. Shall Heshbon mourn for Hai laid waste, and the women of Rabboth for Rabboth make no lament? Nay, put on sackcloth, raise the flags as you scarce among the hedge-crow; Melchom goes into banishment, his prince and his every chieftain with him. So proud of thy valley? Waxed away, now, is that vale of thine, purposed making residents in thy rich store, thou didst flatter thyself none should come near to harm thee, but I mean to fill thee with dread, says the Lord, the God of hosts, dread of all thy neighbours. Each man shall take his own path, scattering in flight, and there shall be none to rally the fugitives. Yet afterwards, the Lord says, I will bring the exiled sons of Ammon back to their home.

And for Edom, this. No more is Thamar wise, as of old, says the Lord of hosts; the prudence of that hoard is lost, its wisdom all gone to waste. Flee away, men of Dedan, and never look behind you, as birds sleep in earth I am bringing ruin upon Edom, calling him to account at last. Here are such, thence, as will leave thee never a cluster, truly right-

<sup>1</sup> *vs. 45, 46.* How again the prophet seems to be speaking from an older point, which may or may not be seen as the already alluded to of *vs. 41, 42, 43.*

<sup>2</sup> The original runs simply, 'Moab, Heshbon, for that is laid waste, lament, daughters of Rabboth.' But it seems clear that Heshbon, which had no connection with the Ammonites, is only brought in by way of comparison. No town of Hai is elsewhere mentioned east of the Jordan, and many think the text is corrupt.

- a robbers as will have their fill; mines to strip them bare, dig up his inheritance there is no hiding in them. The whole breed of him must be destroyed, cover a hillside or neighbour tell, that will say.<sup>1</sup> To my care is committed thy orphan, to me let thy widows look for support. So many there are, the Lord says, that must drink the cup of vengeance all undrinking; and wouldst thou be spared, wouldst thou be acquired?  
 b Acquired for thee is money; thou shalt drink it as the dogs. By my own because I have sworn it, the Lord says, that Boaz shall be an empty wilderness, a name to scold and to curse by; that her daughters shall for ever be derision.  
 c Huz and cry the Lord has brought to my ear, that even now goes out among the nations, Master we and much we against her; on to break!  
 d A little thing I mean thee to be in the world's eyes hereafterward, no regarded among the nations; old now, pride and the insolence of thy heart defiled thee, so make thy nest among the rocks-crevices, so does thou shalt cling to the mountains sometime; but now, be thy cry high as the eagle's, I will put thee down, the Lord says.<sup>2</sup> A very desert Edom shall be; no passer-by but will stand amazed, and his derision at its sufferings; not more vainly Sodom fell, and Gomorrah, and their neighbour cities, that lie uninhabited, far from the homes of men. See how lies from the fens of Jordan valleys wet against yonder processed field! Not less sudden the alarm shall be;<sup>3</sup> and the flock shall have a master of my own choosing. March for me is none, there is none that implied  
 e me, no rival shepherd may challenge a claim like mine! Would you know what the Lord's design is for Edom, what plans he is devising against the homesteads of Theman? Why, he says, it will be used as a ring of wallings to dislodge them,<sup>4</sup> pull their dwelling-places down about their ears!  
 f And with the crash of that ruin earth shakers, far as the Red Sea ring the echoes of it. An eagle's flight yonder conqueror has, to soar high and sweep down on Hema; covered as woman's heart in child-bearing are the warrior haunts of Edom.  
 g And for Dumah, this. Hamath and Arpad see their hopes betray

<sup>1</sup> *vs.* 10, 11. The words 'that will say' are not expressed in the original, but it seems proper to supply them, otherwise the two verses are in direct contradiction, and the mention of 'neighbours' is inexplicable.

<sup>2</sup> *vs.* 12-16. The prophecy of Amos opens with (obviously!) the same experience, and *Abd.* 2 is a reminiscence of *verse* 9 above. The use of common material by the two prophets seems the most probable explanation; cf. *vs.* 17 on *Abd.* 2-11.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'I will suddenly make him run as he,' but the Hebrew text has, 'I will make him (Edom) suddenly run away from it.'

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'the little ones of the flock will throw them down'; the Hebrew text can be interpreted as meaning, 'they will throw down the little ones of the flock.'

these prisoners, the news that reaches them, and they are rocked on a sea of misery; misery gives them no respite. As for Damascus, her strength is lost; her heart; no thought has she but for flight, dismayed by her perils, conscious, like women in child-bearing, with sharp pangs. City as it is crowded, home of such delights, must all abandon her? In her streets as they lie slain, all the flowers of her youth, all her brave warriors lie silent now, the Lord says; and such a fire I will light within Damascus walls as shall find on the palace of Benadai.

And this for Cades, and the realm of Amor, that were destroyed by a Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon. Word comes from the Lord: Up, march against Cades, depose its these children of the East! Pillage there is shall be of home and herd, plundering of man and gear and camel, and cries of Danger everywhere. Fly away, wander far away, men of Amon, deep, says the Lord, be your hiding-places! Here is Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon holding a council of war, devising plans against you.

Up, march against a people that lives at ease, fearing no attack, the Lord says; gates and bars they have none, dwelling there in the wilderness; canals for your plucking, herds a many for your prey! Scattered so they shall be to all the winds, the folk that clip their foreheads bare, and from every corner of their lands death shall devour them, the Lord says. Assy shall be a tale for the serpent, a land for every destroyer; unhabitied it is shall lie, far from the homes of men.

And here is the doom the Lord pronounced to the prophet Jeremiah is against Aram, at the beginning of Sennacherib's reign in Judea. A message is from the Lord of Israel: I mean to break the bows of yonder Aramites, wherein lies all their strength. Upon Aram I will bid the winds blow as from the four corners of heaven, and before each ventiler them like chaff, all nations is none that has not seen their fugitives. Deserted the Aramites shall be by the onset of their mortal enemies; my angry vengeance I will let loose against them, the Lord says, and my sword shall go as their herald till I have taken full toll of them. In Aram I will set up my throne, he says, and rid it altogether of kings and princes. Ten after-wards, so runs the divine promise, I will bring the exiled sons of Aram back to their home.

## CHAPTER 50

**AND** here is the doom the Lord pronounced, with Jeremiah for his spokesman, against Babylon and Chaldeans.

Tell it out, perchance it fits all the world to hear; set up a trophy, and cry the news, leave nothing un told! News of Babylon taken, and Bel thwarted, and Merodach overcomen; all the idols put to shame, routed, all

- 1 the false gods! Here is a people on the march from the north, many that shall attack Babylon and turn her land into a desert; man nor beast shall dwell there, all are fled and gone.
- 2 On the day shall come, the time be ripe at last, the Lord says, when Israel and Judah both together shall come back, weeping as they hasten on their journey to find the Lord their God. For since many years sitting away from the Lord, they will come back, and bind themselves to the Lord by an eternal covenant, never to be forgotten. My people, all this while, has been like a flock gone stray; their shepherds led them by false paths, and left them to roam the hill-side; hill and mountain-side they crossed, and their own resting-place lay forgotten. None passed by but preyed on them; nor did the oppressor's conscience smite him; had they not set the Lord at defiance, that Lord who was the home of their loyalty, the hope of their men?
- 3 Flee, Israel, from Babylon; from Chaldean's land be fastest to depart, like he-goats that lead the way for their fellows. See what a confederacy of great nations I am mustering, there in the north country, to besiege and take Babylon, death-dealing nations that never spare those who are slain. Confusion shall be a prize of war, the Lord says, and all her spoils be common. Ah, boast and brag, trample on my own domain, like calves at grass or belching bulls? Shame waits for the mother that bore you, her pride must be lowered in the dust; those regarded of all as rulers, a desert, pathless and parched! Doomed, all of her, by the Lord's vengeance to empty desolation; no passer-by but shall stand amazed at Babylon, or his decision at her sufferings. To pour poison, arrows, around the walls of Babylon; those, never again arrow, to the Lord her life is forfeit. Now, raise the cry! Everywhere she is striking; hills bottom and gayer wall, the Lord is avenged! Ah, take your fill of vengeance, pay her what she has earned. Leave none in Babylon to sow the fields, or carry scythes in harvest-time; find, each to his own, before the breeder's sword, shed, this way and that, in the countries of their birth.
- 4 Poor Israel, a flock so scattered! Lions have chased them away; first the Assyrian king would prey on them, and since that under Nabonodonosor, of Babylon, has mangled their bones! And now, says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, I mean to have a reckoning with the Babylonian king, and his ruler, to meet with Assyria. And Israel I will restore to his home; Canaan and Bezan shall be his pasture-ground again, hill-country of Ephraim and Galad his hunger shall content.
- 5 When that day comes, the Lord says, when the time is ripe for it, guilt shall be found in Israel no more, for the crimes of Judah's sins you

\* The name of the Hittite text is probably 'letter sending out the cities to smiting nations.'

shall march in vain; the tumult which I hear shall win my pardon.

March on, the Lord says, into the land of Assyria, and call its citizens to account; hulk and bun at their heels! All my command are thou execute. This of battle sounds through the land, and the drink of rage; it ruck and ruin-everywhere! And this Babylon was once a hammer to smite in the world; now it lies by all the world abandoned! I held a trap for thee, a Babylon, and thou wast caught unawares; thy long defiance of the Lord has found thee out and overthrown thee at last. Now the Lord opens his armory, takes out from it the tools that shall wreak his vengeance; he, the Lord of hosts, has work for them to do in the country of the Chaldeans. From the farthest corners of the land drive them; upon a way for us the spoiling; pile up stones from the road in heaps; make an end of her, leave nothing to survive.<sup>1</sup> An end of all her warriors, to the daughter-in-law with sword! We beside them, their day has come, the time when they must meet their reckoning.

Listen to the buzz of voices, as the fugitives escaped from Babylon as come back to Zion, spreading the news how the Lord has been avenged, how the Lord's temple has been avenged.

Arise ye many with bow, give them orders how the city must be taken: Sound about it in a ring, let never a man escape, pay is what its deeds have earned; to Babylon do as Babylon did to others, the city that was the Lord's enemy, defied the holy One of Israel. In her streets they lie a shale, all the flower of her youth, all her brave warrior's lie silent now, the Lord says.<sup>2</sup> Here at this, says the Lord, the God of hosts; thy day is has come, the time when thou must meet thy reckoning! Scourges the is tyrant and falls, with none there to save him; and in those visits of his I will kindle such a fire as shall consume all around it.

Thus says the Lord of hosts: Here is great wrong done to Israel and to its holy lands; he that has them holds them fast, and let them go he will not. Yet they have a strong champion that claims them as his own; his name is is Jeshu, the God of hosts; right and redress he will bring them in such a fashion as will shake earth;<sup>3</sup> and make the houses of Babylon tremble. The sword it must be, the Lord says, for the men of Chaldeans, the citizens of Babylon, and prince, and councillor; the sword for their wife men, is that shall be floods, and their brave men, that shall be cowardly; the sword is for horse and chariot, the sword for all the mixed breed is it, that shall be weak as women, the sword for all their measure-barns, that shall be

<sup>1</sup> The Latin version here seems to have misunderstood the Hebrew text, which refers to the opening of storehouses and the piling up of their contents as tribute to the Lord and therefore available for booty (Jer. 50:7, 8; 7:31, 32).

<sup>2</sup> Repayment from 49:26.

<sup>3</sup> "Shake earth," or perhaps (drawing the Hebrew verb from a different root) "bring repose to earth."

is given up to plunder. And for their waters, not a sword, but drought to dry them up; is not this a land of idols, that leaves to its portents hold?<sup>1</sup> Is it shall be a lair for serpents and strange monsters;<sup>2</sup> a house of the witch, but never again shall man dwell there; age after age, it shall never be rebuilt; nor more ruinously the Lord overthrow Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbour cities, that lie uninhabited, far from the homes of men.<sup>3</sup>

Here is a people marching from the north country, the Lord says, a great nation from the world's end, and vast kings a many. Bow and shield they ply, and their hard horses ply nose; loud their battle-cry as the roaring of the sea. So they ride on, as warriors rich, poor Babylon, thy enemies. Unseen the king's hands drop at the very moment of his grief overcomes him: sharp as the pangs of travail.<sup>4</sup> See how lion from the fens of Judah rallies on against yonder prostrated fold! Not less sudden the storm shall be; and the flock shall have a master of its own choosing. March for me is none, there is none that inspired me, no rival shepherd may challenge a claim like mine! Would you know what the Lord's design is for Babylon, what plans he is devising against the realm of Chaldeans? Why, he says, it will need but an army of worklings to dislodge them, pull their dwelling-place down about their ears!<sup>5</sup> Babylon has fallen; each trembles at the sound of it; a great cry goes up for all the world to hear.

## CHAPTER 51

THUS says the Lord, I mean to let loose on Babylon, and the whole of Delance-land,<sup>6</sup> a destroying blast; winnowers of mine shall reach Babylon and fill it winnowing it, till all the heaps are gone; as if they for Babylon, cut off on every side. Let not a man live to bend bow again, or don breastplate for battle; never a warrior spare, none the next have none left. Everywhere in countryside and street of Chaldeans the mangled

<sup>1</sup> There is here a play upon words in the Hebrew, 'wound' and 'drought' differ only by a single point. The wound half of the name is of doubtful interpretation. Herodotus affirms (1.191) that Cyrus took Babylon by diverting the course of the Euphrates.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'dragons and serpents.' Cf. Is. 34-35, where the Lord's vision reveals the same Hebrew phrase 'dragons and serpents.' There can be no remedy what concerns are really alluded to; some think wild men and beasts.

<sup>3</sup> Reported from 49.18.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 47-48. Reported from 44-45.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. 49, 50. Reported from 49.17-21.

<sup>6</sup> The Hebrew instant of this word form a proper equivalent for the name 'Chaldeans.'

cupper be; nor altogether has Israel's God, the Lord of hosts, forsaken her, and so that holy One of Israel the whole land is forfeit. Five  
 away from the confiners of Babylon, flee for your lives; would you mockly  
 accept her punishment? The time has come when the Lord will take  
 vengeance on her, he it is that sends this notification. Babylon, that was  
 once a golden cup in the Lord's hand, for a whole world's benumbing! Drink nations of that cup, how they reeled and reeled! And now, all  
 in a moment, Babylon herself falls to her ruin. Make the siege, go forth  
 hither to heal those wounds of Israel. Alas, we sought a cure for Babylon,  
 but curing her there was none; thus it is we left her, and went back each  
 to his own land; covers heaven-high the measure of her punishment, and  
 is lost among the clouds. Come, then, since he has given us the reason  
 we needed, comfort we in Zion the great things of the Lord our God.

What arrow, and till quiver; the Lord has put a resolve into the bow  
 of the Median king; he will have Babylon overthrown. The Lord shall  
 be avenged, his temple shall be avenged! Against Babylon's walls display  
 the standard, keep strict watch, post sentinels, lay ambush; the doom of  
 his folk, long since devised, long since denounced, he will execute. Laid  
 by all those tributary streams so enriched, dry and is cracked, dry turned  
 is again. By his own house the Lord of hosts has reared it, dry remains  
 shall swarm about thee like locusts, raising their strange-song.

Power that made the earth,<sup>1</sup> wisdom that orders nature, foresight that  
 spread out the heavens! At the sound of his voice, what murmuring of the  
 waters overbore! He summons up the cloud-wrath from the world's end,  
 turning the lightning into a rain-storm, bringing the winds out of his  
 store-house; how puny, then, is man's skill, how sorry a thing is the  
 career's weakness; after all his pains, only a flicker countervail! Fend  
 imaginations, eerie figures, when the time comes for reckoning, they  
 will be heard of no more. Not such the worship that is the holiness of  
 Jacob's line; their God is the God who made all things, Israel his patri-  
 mony, Jereb, the God of hosts, his name.

Great conqueror, the weapons I wield! By thy means I crush the nations, in  
 unto empire! crush horse and rider, chariot and charioteer, man and a  
 woman, old and young, led and lone, shepherds and flock, ploughmen and  
 team, prince and ruler! And now I mean to repay Babylon, and all the  
 people of Chaldees, for the wrongs they did, says the Lord, and your  
 eyes shall see it. Have at thee, stronghold of rule, the Lord says, a whole  
 world's ruin! My hand is raised to smite thee, and rear thee from thy

<sup>1</sup> vs. 15-16. These verses are repeated from 10. 12-16) it is not easy to see here they are relevant in their present context.

<sup>2</sup> Some think Babylon herself is addressed, as having been previously the seat of the Divine vengeance, but it seems better to understand the passage as referring to King Cyrus, the same as above and verse 41 below.

- is rocky bed; a caldron deep than that he, that never cease-slow, never foundation-cross shall yield; the Lord dreams that so he for ever desolate.
- 17 Uplift your standard for all the world to see, sound the trumpet far and wide, enrol the nations against her; make trust with the kings of Ararat, Minni, and Asnosor, and count Tapsare among her enemies; like a locusts in bristling array swarm your cavalry. Flight all the nations to meet war on her, the kings of Media with their chieftains and sergeants, with their wide dominions; a whole world is roused and travel with the aid of the divine resolve to crush Babylon, make Babylon an empty desert. See how her warriors quit the field, to garrison their strongholds, how their valour dies away and grows womanish, how her walls blacken, as the bars of her gates are shattered! Counter meets counter, post to post hand the tidings on; tell the king of Babylon how his capital has fallen, to laugh and banquets of it, the Feasts occupied, the road-bush affords, discomfited the defenders. Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Babylon in a twinkling-floor time has been smothered; well but a little, and it is ready for harvest.
- 18 Nabuchadnezzar king of Babylon, how he has preyed on me, flamed on me, left me but an empty shell; a devouring monster that with horned hills his mare, thrown back away! Thus does, for her torn flesh, thus Jerusalem, for her blood spilt, avenges Babylon and all yonder Chaldean folk; and now the Lord of hosts promises to maintain their quarrel, to redress their wrongs. I will cure her as I cure Sennacherib, he tells you, to dry up her flow of waters; Babylon shall remain a heap of ruins, a lair for serpents, a thing of wonder and derision, and never a seed as dwell is in it. When though they rage like roaring lions, like young lions that roar as his name? I have a medicine for this thirst of theirs, to banish them and seal away their senses; they shall sleep on, the Lord says, with that eternal sleep from which there is no waking. Never was land led to the daughter-house, never ran or back-post, no unrequiting. Search<sup>1</sup> takes, the passages of kingdoms filled; Babylon turned into a sight of a haunt for all the world to see! Babylon founded and great, the waste a waste closing over her! All her cities a picture of desolation, an empty desert, untroubled, untrodden by mortal foot. But, too, the God of Babylon, I will call to account, and make him disgorge his treasure; so every shall plough his flock into his temple from distant lands; Babylon's defences are down.
- 19 You that are my own people, separate yourself from her neighbour-hood; she you shall be ever fair with shame,<sup>2</sup> ever damned by the men

<sup>1</sup> As in 25.26, a cipher name for Babylon.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'for you should continue so; be fair-haired.' The common rendering (followed by the LXX) 'Do not be fair-haired,' is doubtful grammar and still more doubtful logic.



that smites you, each year a fresh remnant of wrongs done in this land, of rulers struggling for pre-eminence.

A time is coming when I mean to have a reckoning with the idols of a Babylon; the land will learn that they have played it false, when reapers be thick in the heart of it. Heaven and earth, and all they contain, will be triumphing over Babylon, says the Lord, as they see the spoilers marching against her from the north country; through Babylon so many a slain in Israel, of Babylon so many slain, in every corner of their land! Come, forget not, you that have escaped the sword; called far away, as belchick you still of the Lord, will let the thought of Jerusalem return to your hearts.

Aha, we are all confusion; what tears we must shed to, shame-faced, to see that the Lord's holy temple by alien intruders is defiled!<sup>1</sup>

A time is coming, the Lord says, when I mean to have a reckoning with a stone like gods of here. Everywhere in Chaldaea there shall be wounded men a-groaning: let Babylon scale the skies, fortify her walls heaven-high, they shall yet find their way in, the spoilers that do my errand, the Lord says. Babylon shall be all lament, Chaldaea a croud of moan: the mighty act of the city will be disowned, when the Lord lays it waste, by the surge of waves, wave upon wave, and the noise of their shouting. The spoiler has come upon Babylon; her warriors are caught in a trap, their bows are useless now; the Lord's vengeance is irresistible, and he pays full measure. Increased they shall be, princes and councillors and chiefs of men and ruler and warrior; all shall sleep normally the sleep from which there is no waking: such is the decree of that King whose name is Lord, the God of hosts.

That wide wall of Babylon, says the Lord of hosts, shall be dismantled as at first, those high gates burnt. So men labour for nothing; so the toil of nations perishes in the fire.<sup>2</sup>

And now Jeremiah had an errand for Sanballat, son of Harai, son of a Manasse. When king Sedecias departed to Babylon, in the fourth year of his reign, Sanballat went with him as his principal spokesman.<sup>3</sup> Jeremiah so had written down on a single scroll all the doom that was to befall Babylon, all the prophecies against Babylon sleeping. When then a wretched Babylon, he told Sanballat, he sure does reacher all this. And say, as he reaches it: Lord, thou dost threaten this place with destruction; men now boast that I will them, it shall be chaotic for ever. Then, when thou art

<sup>1</sup> This verse is generally understood as a protest from the writer, who does not mean to judge from a sense of shame, but its appearance here is certainly inappropriate, and some suspect that, through accident, it has been misplaced.

<sup>2</sup> The second half of this verse is also found in Hab. 1.13.

<sup>3</sup> According to the Hebrew text, 'his chief of meeting-places,' perhaps in the sense of spokesman.

- 1 have finished rearing the sword, for I have sown it and shall it in the midst of  
 2 Ephraim; and this add: Thus Babylon shall sink, and rise no more out  
 of the calamity I mean to bring upon it; Babylon shall sink away.<sup>1</sup>

Here ends the prophecy of Jeremiah.

## CHAPTER 51

- S**EDECIAS was twenty-one years old when he came to the throne,<sup>1</sup> and  
 in his reign at Jerusalem lasted eleven years; his mother's name was  
 2 Amiah, daughter of Jeremiah of Lotan. He disobeyed the Lord's will,  
 3 so Joachim had: for now the Lord's anger being over Judah and Jerusalem,  
 ready to banish them from his presence. And Sederias in his name re-  
 ceived from the king of Babylon.

- 4 And now, in the ninth year of Sederias' reign, on the tenth day of the  
 tenth month, Nebuchodonosor marched Jerusalem at the head of his  
 5 army. They surrounded it and threw up siege works about it, and so the  
 6 city continued beleaguered until king Sederias' eleventh year. Then, on  
 the ninth day of the fourth month, when famine had broken out in the  
 7 city and the poorer folk had nothing left to eat, a breach was made in the  
 walls; and that night all the fighting men made their escape by way of the  
 gate between the two walls, by the royal garden, leaving the Chaldeans  
 to continue the siege of the city. They chose for their flight the road which  
 8 leads to the desert, and in the desert by Jericho Sederias was overtaken by  
 the Chaldeans, who had set out to pursue. All his retinue deserted him,  
 9 and so, a prisoner, the king was taken away to Babilonia, in the land of  
 10 Chanaan, where Nebuchodonosor passed sentence on him. This by the  
 king of Babylon were all his sons, these in their father's sight; this by the  
 11 king of Babylon, at Babilonia, were all the nobles of Jude; and as the  
 Sederias himself, his eyes were put out, and he was carried off, loaded  
 with chains, to Babylon, where he remained a prisoner all the day of his  
 death.

- 12 On the tenth day of the fifth month in the nineteenth year of Nebuchodonosor's reign, the commander of his bodyguard, Nebuzardan, came  
 13 on his master's command to Jerusalem, where he burned down temple and  
 palace and private dwellings too: no house of stone but he set it on fire.  
 14 The troops he brought with him were employed in dismantling the walls

<sup>1</sup> The words 'Babylon shall sink away' represent what is probably an error of copying in the Hebrew text.

<sup>2</sup> The subject of this chapter, chapters 48-50, is reported from IV Reg. 24 and 25. There are a few very slight differences, some of which suggest errors of transcription.

on every side of it. Then Nabuzardan carried off the remnant of the people that were left in the city, the craftsmen who had gone over to Nebuchodonosor, and the common folk generally; leaving only such of the priestly sort as were vine-dressers and figs labourers. He took pillars of brass and bases much and the great basin of bronze that stood in the Lord's temple; the Chaldeans broke up, and took away all the basins to Babylon; for bronze, too, they carried away pot and fork, ladle and cup and a sifter, all the apparatuses of worship that were of bronze; for gold, a ton, and for silver, bowl and snuff and urn and basin and lamp-stand and spoon and goblet; nothing did Nabuzardan leave behind him. There was no reckoning the weight of basins, when the two pillars, the great basin, and the twelve basins silver supporting it, all set up by Solomon in the temple, are included. Each pillar was eighteen cubits high, twelve a cubit round, and four cubits thick, and they were hollow within. On each stood a brazen capital, five cubits in height, with network and pomegranate mouldings on the rim; the pattern of each was the same. There were ninety-six pomegranate broiders, making a braided in all, and all had network around them.

Prisoners, too, Nabuzardan carried away with him, the two chief priests, Surtan and Sophonias, the the three door-keepers from the temple, and among the citizens, the chamberlains who commanded the army, seven other courtiers who were left in the city, the secretary who was charged with the army and had the keeping of records, and sixty surviving citizens of the common sort. All these were carried away by a Nabuzardan to Babelia, two Nabuchodonosor's prisoners; and there it is Babelia, in the Emath country, Nabuchodonosor put three to death. So the men of Jude were killed from their company. Three thousand and a twenty-three Jewish citizens Nabuchodonosor banished in the seventh year of his reign, and another eight hundred and thirty-two, from Jerusalem, in the eighteenth year of it; then, in his twenty-third year, seven hundred and forty-five were banished by Nabuzardan, the captain of the bodyguard; four thousand six hundred in all.

On the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month, in the thirty-seventh year after King Joachim of Jude had been carried into exile, the new king of Babylon, Evil-Merodach, in this four year of his reign, gave orders to his captive and released him from prison. Gradually did Evil-Merodach receive him, give him a seat of honour above the other captive kings, and released him of his prisoner's garb. All the rest of his life he was as untroubled at the royal table; all the rest of his life he received, day by day, a perpetual allowance granted to him, as long as he should live, by the king's bounty.

## THE LAMENTATIONS OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAS

**W**HEN Israel was brought into captivity, and Jerusalem left desolate, the prophet Jeremiah sat down thus and wept, with this mournful lamentation following. And as he spoke, ever he sighed and moaned in the bitterness of his heart.

### CHAPTER I

**A**LONG the dwells, the city erstwhile so populous; a widow now, once a queen among the nations; tributary now, that once had provinces at her command.

- 1 Be rent the wings; there in the darkness her cheeks are wet with tears; of all that courted her, none left to console her, all these lovers grown weary of her, and turned into enemies.
- 2 Grief the suffering and the heritage of Juda's exile;<sup>a</sup> that she must needs dwell among the heathen! Now repine our she flock; drove at her both the parents, and perils on either hand.
- 3 Desolate, the streets of Zion; no flocking, now, to the assembly; the gateways he deserted. Rights prices, and the maidens go in mourning, so bitter the grief that hangs over all.
- 4 Estranged, now, her Jerusalem; with her enemies nothing gets nearer. For her many sins, the Lord has brought down on her, and all her children have gone into exile, driven before the oppressor.
- 5 Fled is her beauty, the Zion that was once so fair; her chiefs have yielded their ground before the power, strengtheners as men<sup>b</sup> that can find no pardon.
- 6 Grieved the memories she holds, of the hour when all her ancient glories passed from her, when her people fell defenceless before the invader, succumbing before an enemy that decided them.<sup>c</sup>
- 7 Bitterly Jerusalem sighs; what wonder if she become an outcast?<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Literally, this verse appears to imply that Juda has gone into exile because of afflictions and some think the reference here to Egypt, Israel in Egypt and elsewhere. But the word used for 'exile' really means 'depression.'

<sup>b</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'wages.'

<sup>c</sup> Literally, 'her enemies decided her sentence,' that is, her punishment. The Hebrew text is generally interpreted as meaning that Zion, in her affliction, succumbed her past glories; but the expression is obscure.

<sup>d</sup> 'An outcast': literally, 'unable to hold its ground'; but the word used in the Hebrew text implies emotional-depression.

How they fell to despising her when they saw her shame, that once far-  
sought her! Deeply she sighed, and turned away her head.

All night stars of her robe the diffident conceal; also so ruthless of  
her doom, alas, falls so low, with none to comfort her! Mark it well,  
Lord; we have troubled I, how anxious my deliverer!

Jehovah's hands were laid on all the measured, so it was that she must  
see Goliath profane her sanctuary. Goliath, by thy ordinance from the  
assembly defamed.

Kindred was none but went sighing for lack of bread, offered in  
poorish belittles for food to revive men's hearts. Mark it well, Lord,  
and see my grief shared!

Look well, you that pass by, and say if there was ever grief like this  
grief of mine: never a grape on the vineyard left to gloss, when the Lord's  
thorn of vengeance is fulfilled.<sup>1</sup>

Must live from heaven waste my whole being, ere I can leave my house?  
Must lie still ere in a net, to drag me back from my counsel? Therefore  
he leaves me, to give away all the day long with grief.

No scepter is given me, the yoke of guilt I bear, by his hand bound to  
down upon my neck; see, I sit under it! The Lord has given me up a  
prisoner to despise: there is no escaping.

Of all I had, the Lord has taken away the scepter; left to me, all the  
thorns of my deliverer, under his strict audit; Sins, poor maid, have won  
a white-pass with trachinid done!

Pray you, should I not weep? Fountain these eyes are, that needs must  
flow; comfort is none at hand, that should revive my spirits. Lost to  
me, all those sons of mine, unmurmured by their enemy.

Quest for consolation is vain, let her plead where she will; neighbours  
of Jacob, so the Lord desires, see Jacob's enemies, and all around they  
shrink from her, as from a thing unclean.

Right the Lord has in his control; I have set his commands at defiance.  
O might, take warning; for what pains I suffer, all my folk gone into  
exile, both men and maid.

So like the friends that were once my school! And now the city lacks  
priests and scribes both, that were begging their bread, and sighed out  
their souls for the want of it.

Take note, Lord, of my anguish, how my bosom burns, and my heart is  
scold within me, in bitter rage.<sup>2</sup> And all the while, sword thrums with-  
out, and death not less cruel within.

<sup>1</sup> The opening of this verse, in the Hebrew text, is of somewhat interpretation, some think the meaning is, 'May it never happen to you! The escaped enemy has  
not here and is mine in name due to a mistaken interpretation in the Latin.

<sup>2</sup> Literally: 'for I am full of bitterness.' But the Hebrew text has, 'for truth  
it is that I have rebelled against thee.'

- 21 Uncomforted my sorrow, but not refused; my enemies hear it, and rejoice that my miseries are of thy contriving. Ah, but when thy promise comes true, they shall feel my grief!
- 22 Vengeance who didst leave my tongue so bare, for my mouth offending, smelt well their cruelty, and strip them too in their sins; lest he sight a woe and a woe heart to claim it.

## CHAPTER 2

**A**LAS, what spectacle of blood is this, the Divine anger has thrown over a wretched Sion! The pride of Israel cast down from heaven to earth; the ground where the Lord's foot once rested, now, in his anger, forgotten!

- 1 Blessed shades of Jacob, by the Lord's unparelled vengeance engulfed; woe that keeps Jude inevitable haled to the ground in ruin; kingdom and throne slugged in the dust!
- 2 Created by all the defences of Israel, under his displeasure; failed us, at the enemy's onset, the protection of his right hand; Jacob must be lodged about, as by flames of a consuming fire.
- 3 Tremble his bent bow, surely the play of his right hand smiting us; all that was highest in poor Sion's dwelling-place needs more polish, under the fury rife of his vengeance.
- 4 Enemies he smites us, and has engulfed the whole of Israel in ruin; gaze the palaces, gaze the strongholds; Ah, poor Sion weeps now, weeps mad, with covered spires.<sup>1</sup>
- 5 Furies, as it had been some garden shed, his own tabernacle; his own dwelling-place with none he would pull down! Feast-day and sabbath should be forgotten in Sion; for king and priest, only anger and scorn.
- 6 Grown weary of his sin, throes his own necessary turning away to abhorrence, the Lord has given up yonder embattled towers to the enemy; their cries ring through the temple like those of holiday.
- 7 Hastily the Lord went about his work, to strip the inviolable city of her walls; cast his measuring-line, bury his hand with the task of over-throw, till wall and rampart should lament their common ruin.
- 8 If thy gates of bar ing towards earth, bars rivers and coast king and chieftain are the away, rolled among the heathen; tradition is dead, nor any prophet leaves, in vision, the Lord's will.
- 9 Jerusalem's aged folk sit there in the dark, dumb with sorrow; dust strewed over their heads, and sackcloth their garb; never a maid shall you see but has her head bowed down to earth.

<sup>1</sup> The Lament here describes God as filling Jude with "terrors" and "lamentation"; the name of the Hebrew is rather "lamentation and lament," as in Is. 39. 2.

Even anguish for the overflow of an unhappy race, that dim eye with a tear, that sin eye being to its depths, as my heart goes out in boundless compassion! Child and babe lie flailing in the streets.

Listen, how they ask where all the bread and wine is gone to! Would it they have more, yet there in the open streets you shall see them faint away, sighing not their lives on their mothers' bosoms.

Might I but comfort them with such another as myself? What queen so unhappy as Jerusalem, what maid as Sion desolate? How shall I comfort them? Sea-deep is thy ruin, and past all cure.

Never a true vision or a wise thy prophets have for thee, never show is there where thy guilt was, and nought there is repentance; lies and hurts are all the burden of their revealing.

Openly the passer-by deride thee, poor maid! clap hands, and hiss, and wag their hands at thee; So much, they cry, for the city that was once the megapole of beauty, pride of the whole earth!

Fold every man and woman at thee; how they hiss and gush their words! Now is prey on her married! What fortune, that we should have lived to see this day, so long looked for in vain!

Quit is the Lord of his oath taken in times past, all his purpose is false-flint; for thee, ruin relentless, for thy bitter misery, triumph and high achievement.

Round those inevitable defenses, cry they upon the Lord in good manner. Day and night, Sion, for thy tears stream down; never rest thou, never let that eye weary of its task.<sup>2</sup>

Simples in the night watches make thy song; how thy heart's prayer is increasingly lit over thy hands in supplication for infant lives; ponder, at the street corners, they are dying of famine.

Think well, Lord, is there any other people of whom thou hast taken as much toll? Shall women eat her own child, so dry, hands can still clasp it? Is the Lord's sanctuary, prince and prophet to slake?

Unmolested they lie on the bare earth, the young and the aged; maid and warrior slain by the sword! This day of thy vengeance was to be all massacre, thou wouldst kill unsparingly.

Vengeance this day all around me; what maddening of thy wrath,<sup>3</sup> as is for a women assembly! Sweeps it come, nor any remnant left, of all I fondled and fostered, the enemy has taken full toll.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'my liver is poured out on the ground.'

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew *homer* *Pho* and *Pho* are unconformably transposed, here and in 3:46-51, 4:26 and 27.

<sup>4</sup> The first part of this verse is perhaps corrupt; the Hebrew text of it gives a rather impossible sense.

<sup>5</sup> Some think that we should interpret the Hebrew text as meaning 'you are of my neighbours,' not 'heaven.'

## CHAPTER 3

**A**LTHOUGH what truths have I not known, under the smothering rock?

- 1 **A**ttended I for light, how deeper shadow the Lord's guidance led me;  
 2 Always upon me, none other, felt indignantly the blow,  
 3 Broken this frame, under the wrinkled skin, the rank flesh.  
 4 Himmous of despair fills my prospect, walled in on every side;  
 5 Buried in darkness, and, like the dead, insensibility.  
 6 Gladly he forces me in, beyond hope of rescue; leads up with feters.  
 7 Cry out for mercy as I will, prayer of mine wins no audience;  
 8 Climb those smooth walls I may not; every way of escape he has undone.  
 9 Deep embathed he lies, as lurking beast as flies from the covert;  
 10 Driven aside from my path, I fall a lonely prey to his sneering.  
 11 Dread archer, of me he makes a target for all his arrows;  
 12 Each shaft of his quiver is my vain thought to reflect home!  
 13 Evermore for me the taunt of my neighbours, their songs of derision.  
 14 Entertainment of bitter herbs he gives me, and of wormwood my fill,  
 15 Fills all my words with hard ground-moans, bids me feed on ashes.<sup>1</sup>  
 16 Far away is my old contentment, happier days forgotten;  
 17 Farswell, my hopes of long continuance, my patient trust in the Lord!  
 18 Grief and suffering, gall and wormwood, keep all this well in memory.  
 19 God knows it shall be remembered, and with staking of the heart;  
 20 Ours there can be none other of remaining confidence.  
 21 His be the thanks if we are not extinguished; his mercies never weary;  
 22 Hope comes with each dawn; art thou not faithful, Lord, to thy promise?  
 23 Hear whinings, The Lord is my portion; I will trust him yet.  
 24 In him be thy trust, for him thy heart's longing, gracious thou that feed him;  
 25 If deliverance thou wouldst have from the Lord, is silence vain to  
 26 It is well thou shouldst learn to hear the yoke, now is thy youth,  
 27 Just burden, to solitude and silence hardy borne.  
 28 Joy may not be thine, for mouth that bites the dust,  
 29 Jarring of the multitude, and cheek buffeted in scorn, heavily endured.

<sup>1</sup> There is no general agreement whether this chapter had especially the concluding part of it) refers to the personal experiences of Jeremiah, or describes generally the misfortune of the Jewish race.

<sup>2</sup> The name given here is that of the Sorrowful Greek; the Latin words given in the first half, 'We have broken my words one and all'; the Hebrew one in the second half is usually rendered, 'We have turned our faces against the altar.'



Know for certain, the Lord has not finally abandoned thee; 18  
 Kind welcome the worstest shall have, from one so rich in kindness. 19  
 Kins of Achan he will not crush or cast away wantonly; 20  
 Let there be oppression of the poor under duress, 21  
 Law's right denied, such as the most High grants to all men, 22  
 Lying perversion of justice, then he cannot overlook it.<sup>1</sup> 23  
 Man may flourish; only the Lord brings his word to pass; 24  
 Mingled good and evil proceed both from the will of the most High; 25  
 Mortal is none may rejoice; let each his own sins remember. 26  
 Narrowly our path runs we, and to the Lord return; 27  
 Never hand or heart but must point heavenward this day! 28  
 Nothing but defiant transgression on our part; and shouldst thou 29

rejoice?

Over our heads thy angry vengeance lowered; smiting, thou wouldst us 30  
 not spare.

Oh, barrier of cloud, our power had no strength to pierce! 31  
 Offlousing and refuse of mankind thou hast made us, 32  
 Far to shame by the mocking grimaces of our enemies. 33  
 Prophets we had, but their word was peril and pitfall, and ruin at the 34  
 bar.<sup>2</sup>

Poor Sion, for thy voluntary these cheeks are furrowed with tears; 35  
 Quail if thou wouldst the restless fever of my weeping, 36  
 Quickly, Lord, look down from heaven and pay heed to us, 37  
 Quies forego, eye and soul, with grief Jerusalem's daughters bear.<sup>3</sup> 38  
 Rejoicings as hawk in air they pursued me, enemies unprovoked, 39  
 Stole me of life itself, sealed with a stone my poison door. 40  
 Bound my head the waters closed, and I had given myself up for lost, 41  
 Save for one hope; to thee, Lord, I cried from the pit's depth, 42  
 Sure of thy aidment, wouldst thou turn a deaf ear to sighs of one- 43  
 ghast?

Scorned, thou didst cast me to my side, whispering, Do not be afraid. 44  
 Thine, Lord, to take my psalm; thine to rescue me from death; 45  
 The malice of my enemies o' discover, my wrongs to redress. 46  
 Thrust away from thy sight<sup>4</sup> the grudge they bear me, the ill they put- 47  
 upon,

Unhous'd by thee their taunts, their whispered slanders!<sup>5</sup> 48

<sup>1</sup> *ms.* 25-26. This is perhaps the best account of the various interpretations suggested for this difficult passage. It seems that the word "overlook" is emphatic, and that the rest of verse 23 is a question, "Does the Lord also overlook?"

<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew *ms.*, "Peril and pitfall, rock and ruin have overtake us."

<sup>3</sup> Literally, "My eye has bewailed my soul handsly as the suck of all the daughters of my city," the text is perhaps corrupt.

- a Dressed abroad or in secret, their malice would see them soon (l) night;
- a Up in arms, or was in secret weapons, ever against me they raise the battle-song.
- a Vain then with the punishment their ill deeds have earned.
- a Veiled by those blind hearts with fresh blindness of thy own making;
- a Vanish from the earth their whole breed, nor thy vengeance leaves of punishing them!

## CHAPTER 4

**A**LL die, now, and discoloured, the gold that once shone so fair  
 Humped up at every street-corner lie belovèd stones.

- 1 Bright they shone once in all their reserve, the men of Sion, and now  
 what are they? Little regarded as common earthworms, of the power's  
 belittling.
- 2 Cut-off (jackal<sup>1</sup> is fed at its den's breast) and has my people grown un-  
 natural towards its own children, like some outcast in the desert?
- 3 Dry throat and parching tongue for babe at the breast; children asking  
 for bread, and never a crust to share with them!
- 4 Ever they fasted daily, that now lie starved in the streets; ever went  
 richly arrayed, and now their tapers clank at the draggill.
- 5 Falt'ring Judah Harrier punishment the most cruel undergo than  
 gaily Sodom, that perished all in a moment, and never a blow struck.
- 6 Gone, the fair bloom of princely cheeks,<sup>2</sup> snow-pale, cream-white,  
 and as dried (leop,<sup>3</sup> and all supple-lean.
- 7 None is so recognising them, not in the streets, coal-black, skin clinging  
 to bones, dry as wood!
- 8 It were better to have fallen at the sword's point than yield them to the  
 snare of hunger, wasted away through famine.
- 9 Jude brought low, and mother-love forgotten; that women should eat  
 their own children, cooked with their own hands!
- 10 Knotted at last to the Lord's anger; ruin down from heaven the storm  
 of his vengeance, lighting a flame that burns Sion to the ground.
- 11 Little dreamed they, long and careless folk the world over, that any  
 would of the foe should come Jerusalem near;
- 12 Malice and lawlessness it was of priest and prophet, whereby innocent

<sup>1</sup> This is the accepted meaning of the word used in the Hebrew text, here represented in the Latin by an obscure and inappropriate rendering.

<sup>2</sup> 'Princely cheeks'; the word 'Mamers' can hardly be used in its technical sense (Ham. 4), and is better taken in its other meaning of 'concerned persons.' That royal palaces are referred to is only a conjecture based on the context.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'andest leop'; the Hebrew word perhaps means 'lean.'

own names to their deaths, that brought such punishment.

Now, as they walk blindly through the streets, they are drilled with a blood; no help for it, gather their skirts about them as they weep.

Out of my wail arise one or other, Back, pollution, do not touch me!<sup>1</sup> The very Gentiles present in alarm, Here is no place for them!

Protection the Lord gives them no longer, they are dispersed under his a frown; the priesthood no longer claims, did not we pity.<sup>2</sup>

Quashed is the hope our eyes crained for, while hope was left us; or looking for help so eagerly to a nation that had none to give!

Refuge for us in the merchant's highway is none; we are near the end; it is all is over, this is the end.

Swiftly they sight of eagles the pursuit, even on the mountains they give chase, even in the desert take us by surprise.

Through our flesh he who is worthy of life to us, our anointed king, is led away captive;<sup>3</sup> under his shadow we hoped our race should thrive.

Until thy wars ceased, thou art, Edom, triumph art, land of Shu; the is some cup thou too shalt drink, and be drunken, and snipped here.

Wretched wife-of-Sion! Sion's worstest deed, recovered her strength; in Edom called to account, discovered her guilt!

## CHAPTER 5

**B**ETHINK thee, Lord, of our ill case; see where we lie humiliated, Lord seeing take pity! Now tenants our lands have, our houses design a quarry; orphaned sons of widowed mothers were not more defrauded. Ours to buy the very water we drink, pay a price for every stick of a fire-wood; fed hither and thither under the pole, with no ransom given, we must make our peace with men of Egypt or Assyria, for a belly-bell of a bread. So many we bear the guilt of our fathers, that stained and are gone! Shave for our custom now, and woe to ransom us, bread won out in the desert, and at peril of our lives from the sword's point! What wonder if our skins are burnt dry as an oven, melted by long famine?

Never a woman in Sion, never a maid in all Judah's cities, but has met with children; mothers' breasts hurry our prisons to the pining; a sentence is none far gay lads. Telling at the mill, the flower of our is

<sup>1</sup> *ms. 12404*. The interpretation of this passage is very doubtful. The Latin version in the above is accordance with the Hebrew *ms.*, and gives 'him' instead of 'them' in verse 15, perhaps with the idea that *Almsgiver* God is referred to (*cf. verse 16*).

<sup>2</sup> It is generally held that the literal and primary reference of this verse is to King Zedekiah. The Hebrew *ms.* has, not 'through our flesh,' but 'through the way they have led.'

in youth, or staggering under loads of wood;<sup>1</sup> never an old man left to sit  
in at the gate, or a young man to wake the echoes of the hags: gone, all our  
strength, all our music drowned in sadness. Alas, we are chosen; the  
wrath has faded from our hearts: there are sad hearts everywhere, and  
in this eye. What, does not the hill of Zion lie desolate, ravaged by the  
foes?

11    Lord, thou abidest even; age after age thy throne endures; and wilt  
thou still be forgetful of us, through the long years leave us forsaken?  
12    Bring us back to thee, Lord, and let us find our home; bring back to us  
the days of our youth; wouldst thou altogether abandon us, shall thy  
indignation know no measure?

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<sup>1</sup> The verse given is that of the Hebrew text of Lk. viii.

## THE PROPHECY OF BARUCH

### CHAPTER I

THE words which follow were committed to writing in the country of Babylon. The writer of them, Baruch, was descended from Helcias, through Nerias, Mardias, Sedecias and Sebel, and wrote in the fifth year . . . on the seventh day of the month, at the time when the Chaldeans took Jerusalem and burnt it to the ground.<sup>1</sup> Baruch read this book of his aloud to Jechonias, son of Josiah, king of Juda. All the people, too, looked to hear the reading of it, scribes, and royal princes, and elders, and common folk high and low; all that were then living in the country of Babylon, near the river Sack.

And as they heard it, all were weeping and fasting and paper offered in the Lord's presence; they made a collection of money besides, each according to his means, which they sent to the chief priest, Jechias, son of Helcias, son of Salom, and his fellow priests and fellow citizens at Jerusalem. . . . when he<sup>2</sup> journeyed to Juda on the tenth day of Sivan, taking with him the necessary ornaments which had been removed from the temple, and were now to be restored. They were of silver, Sedecias, the son of Josias, that now reigned in Juda, had had them made, when Jribanias, with the princes and all the nobles and many other citizens of

<sup>1</sup> It seems almost certain that the text is defective here; no mention the day of the month and not mention which month it was, would be most unusual. But probably the occasion was a feast considerable one. It is difficult to see how the event referred to in verses 4-8 could have happened in or near the year 573, when Jerusalem was burnt; it had been already besieged for two years already. It looks as if these prophecies of Baruch had been dated over a period of years, like those of his master Jeremiah (Jer. i. 3, 23), and only the earlier part of them had been sent to Jerusalem at the time indicated. The text will have run: 'In the fifth year of Sedecias' reign, right up to the seventh year of it, the 7th month and the seventh day of the month, when the Chaldeans took Jerusalem.'

<sup>2</sup> The 'one' hardly be Jechias; and the last mention of Baruch is too far away to justify a reference by pronoun. Another clear deficiency in the text seems pointing the money was sent to Jerusalem 'by the hand of' some person named Baruch or another. It is certainly assumed that Sedecias had made silver ornaments at Jerusalem, to replace the old ones which had been carried off; that these silver ones were carried off in their turn (on some unspecified occasion), and were then returned to Juda (on some unspecified return). All this seems utterly elaborate. The gold ornaments were removed with Jechonias (IV. 22, 23-24), and at the same time all metal-workers were called off. viz. Sedecias, who was still in Sivan, had to get metals made up in Jerusalem (or in Babylon) and with these silver models the prophesy of Baruch, or rather such parts of it as had already been committed to writing, could continuously be despatched.

Jerusalem, was carried off by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, to his own country.

- 10 Here is money, they said, with which you are to buy victims for burnt-offering, and incense; bloodless offerings<sup>1</sup> too you must make, and  
 11 attach the flesh consumed, at the altar of the Lord our God. You shall pray long life for king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and his son Belshazzar, that their reign on earth may last as long as heaven itself. May the Lord grant courage to all of us, and send us a gleam of hope; long  
 12 shall we value the protection of king Nebuchadnezzar and his son Belshazzar, persevering loyally in their service and winning their favour! And  
 13 intercede with the Lord our God for us crying against his divine will we have rebelled, and to this hour he has not released. Scan closely, too,  
 14 this book we are sending to you; it is to be read aloud on fast days and  
 15 in times of solemn assembly. You shall make your prayer in those words following.

The fault was never with him, the Lord our God; even the blots of shame, as all Jews this day and all the citizens of Jerusalem can witness.  
 16 With king and prince of wars, priest and prophet of wars the fault lies, and with our fathers before us. We have defied the will of the Lord our  
 17 God; trust and loyalty we had once to give him, not over showed him  
 18 extortion, by listening to his divine voice and following the commands  
 19 he gave us. Ever since the day when he rescued our fathers from Egypt  
 20 from the sound of his voice: still at last, as these things can witness, hate  
 21 and hate have caught us by the heels, the very same he pronounced to his  
 22 servant Moses long ago, when he had rescued our fathers from Egypt and  
 23 was leading them on to a land of milk and honey. Unheeded, that  
 24 divine voice, when message after message came to us through his pro-  
 25 phets; each man follow the whim of his own false heart, doing murder  
 26 to other gods, and serving the will of the Lord, our own God, as defiance.

## CHAPTER 3

**THAT** is why the Lord our God has made good his threats against us, against the rulers of Israel, whether kings or nobles, and against the  
 1 common folk of Israel and Judah. There was a threat made to the law of  
 2 Moses, that went beyond all his terms even on earth, and yet in Jerusalem  
 3 it came true: that men would be eating the flesh of their own sons and

<sup>1</sup> Literally "incense," but it is clear that the Septuagint Greek has confused two separate Hebrew words, and the Latin version has come to us through the Greek.

daughters! Neighbouring kings had the mastery, and in all the far corners to which the Lord had banished us, we became a thing of scorn and horror. Since not we, that might have ruled; and the reason of it? Because by sinning we offended the Lord our God, and left his name unheeded; his was never the fault; for us and for our fathers the blood of atonement, as this day can witness. No calamity has befallen us but he, the Lord, had prophesied it; and still we would not see fit for the divine mercy, but each of us went on straying by false paths. That is why the Lord's justice came for our iniquity; he has but fulfilled what he threatened, in all he has imposed upon us,<sup>1</sup> the Lord our God is without fault. It was our fault if we would not listen to his warnings, would not follow the divine commands which he set before us.

Lord God of Israel, whose restraining hand rescued thy people from Egypt with portents and wonders, with sovereign power slightly manifested, and now thou removest that in thine eye, we are distressed. We have wronged thee, revolted against every claim thou hast upon us. But still, it would thy vengeance give over the pursuit! So wide thou hast parted us, and we are left so few. Grant a hearing, Lord, to this our plaint and a plea; for thy own honour, be our saviour still, and win over the hearts of our captors; prove to the whole world that thou art the Lord our God, that it was thy name Israel bore, and Israel's race yet bears. Look down upon us, Lord, from the sanctuary where thou dwellest; thine be the attentive ear, the watchful eye! Once health has left body, and a man lies in the grave, honour and wealth is none he can pay thee; but let a man be distressed over his great misfortune, so that he goes bowed and uttering, dim eyes and hungry belly, then, Lord, thou shalt have the honour that is thine due.

Well for us, O Lord our God, as we pour out our supplication for thy mercy, if we could plead that fathers of ours, kings of ours, did loyally thy will. But no; thou hadst given them due warning, through thine prophets that were servants of thine, before leaving thy angry vengeance have to reap, and the warning went unheeded.<sup>2</sup> How shoulder and how a neck, said the divine voice, and he made to the king of Babylon; and the land I gave to your fathers shall still be your house. Before to serve the king of Babylon at my divine bidding, and Jerusalem with her daughter shall secure their loss; no more the cry of joy and mirth, no more is the voice of bridegroom and of bride; unrevoked the whole land shall be, and unshaken. But all thy threats could not persuade them to be the as

<sup>1</sup> This is usually understood of God's commandments, but the context suggests rather a reference to his chastisements.

<sup>2</sup> "And the warning went unheeded"; these words are not in the original, but are supplied here from the context in order to make the connection between verses 19 and 20 intelligible.

king of Babylon's vessels; thy servants prophesied in vain. And as thy threats were performed; kings of men and fathers of men might not rest in quiet in their graves; their bones were cast out to endure war's heat and sight's fear, and great anguish they endured in their deaths, from the sword, and famine, and pestilence.<sup>1</sup> As for the people that was the shrine of thy name, thou wastest it into the thing it is this day, for Israel's sin, for Judah's sin.

27 No greater proof we could have had of thy consideration, of that abominable mercy<sup>2</sup> which is thine. And successful was the promise thou didst make to thy servant Moses, when thou batest him write down the law for Israel's acceptance. One of all this thronging multitude, thou dost say to him, when a merry remnant of untried soldiers will be left, if my voice goes unheeded! And go unheeded it will; this is a race that ever spurns the yoke. What then if they come back to a right mind, thou in the country of their banishment? What if they learn to recognize that I, the Lord, am their God. (the goodly heart, the listening ear, are mine to give a thought: what if they remember to honour me, to invoke my name, in their exile? What if they follow the example of their fathers, that were sinners before them, repeat of their stubborn infidelity and of all their ill-doings? Then they shall come home again; back to the country I promised to their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; they shall be masters of it, and their detached strength shall drive men. A fresh covenant I will make with them, that shall last for ever; I their God, and they my people; never again will I banish my people, the sons of Israel, from the land I have made theirs.

## CHAPTER 3

**L**ORD Almighty, God of Israel, hear us live in jeopardy, hear us: 1 Untroubled hearts, that plead with thee! Listen, Lord, and have mercy, 2 none so merciful as thou; pardon the sin that lie open in thy sight. Thou 3 reignest for ever; must we for ever be lost? Lord Almighty, God of 4 Israel, Hark to the prayer Israel makes to thee from the grave.<sup>3</sup> Our

<sup>1</sup> The Greek word used here (of which the Latin gives a literal rendering) means 'a despatching of corpses' and does not exactly the translation 'banishment.' It is probably used here, as in Jer. 34.22, to represent the Hebrew word for 'pestilence' as something especially sent by Almighty God.

<sup>2</sup> In verses 19-26, the 'mercy' referred to centres in the warning issued to the Jews against further rebellion. In verses 27-32 the same mercy is shown in the promise of ultimate redemption.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'the prayer of the dead of Israel.' Some think this refers to prayer offered by the dead on behalf of the living others, that the case of Israel is, by a metaphor, described as 'dead' others, that the Hebrew text had simply 'the folk of Israel,' and that the Greek translator, having no word-points to guide him, was deceived by the identical form of the two words.



fashion it was that defied the Lord their God, and gave no heed to him; and so on, their sins, the punishment clinging. Forget the wrong they did, O those fathers of ours; remember thy ancient power, thy own honor, this day: only to thee, the Lord our God, shall praise of ours be given. Why also hast thou inspired us with such dread of thee? Thou wouldst have us learn to invoke thy name, to utter thy praise, here as exiles, in proof that we disown the wrong our fathers did, when their sin defied thee. Better we are this day, disgraced by that we suffer now, and weeping, than we have made amends for all the wrong our fathers did when they abandoned thee, abandoned the Lord our God.

Listen, Israel, to the warnings that shall bring thee life; give attentive audience, if thou wouldst learn to be wise. What meaneth it, Israel, that it thou lookest thyself in the enemy's land, grown old in exile, wretched as a dead body, no more taken into account than men who have gone down into their graves? It is because thou hast forsaken the fountain whence is all wisdom issuing. If thou hadst but followed the path God showed thee, or thou mightest have lived in peace honestly. Learn where to find wisdom, and strength, and discernment as thou wilt find length of years, rest, and sweet life, and cheerfulness, and peace. Who can tell where wisdom is dwelt, who has made his way into her secret-house? What has become of those heathen princes, who gained mastery of the beasts that roam the earth, named the birds for their pastimes, heaping up silver and gold, or man's confidence, man's inextinguishable quest? How anxiously they toiled for wealth! And now these devices of theirs are beyond our tracing.

They disappeared, went to their graves, and others succeeded them, as a younger generation saw the light and peopled the earth in its name; but so all they could not find their way to the true wisdom, the path to it it was hidden still. Their children, too, clothed as it is vain, it was as far as ever from their reach. In Chanaan, none had heard tell of it, in a Thamos none had caught sight of it; even the sons of Agar, as well as schooled in earthly wisdom, men the merchants of Marib and Thamos, with all their store of legend, their skill and cunning laboriously gained, never found the track of true wisdom, or told us what its home was.

Israel, how wide is God's house, how spacious is his domain, large is beyond all bound, high beyond all measure! The harvest of old years is sown; there, men whose time has come down to us from the beginning of time, large in years, great warriors; but it was not thus God had it chosen; they died without ever attaining true knowledge. Not for them it was the possession of wisdom, and in their folly they perished.

What man ever sought heaven, gained wisdom there, and brought it to

<sup>17</sup> v. 24 sup. God's house is usually identified as heaven generally, but it must be confessed that this reference to the gates belongs to a series of traditions about which we know little.

w back from the clouds? What man ever crossed the sea, and found it there,  
 n brought it back like a cargo of pure gold? The path to it none may know,  
 n the close of it none may find. Only he who knows all things possesses it,  
 n only his mind measures it. He it is who framed the shining earth, and  
 n filled it with cattle and four-footed beasts of every kind. It is on his  
 n round that the light goes forth, his compass that it stays with one;  
 n loquently the stars shine out, keeping the watches he has appointed; answer  
 n when he calls their names-*well*, and offer their glad radiance to him who  
 n fashioned them. Such a God is ours, what rival will be compared to him?  
 n He it is who has the key to all knowledge, and gave it to his servant  
 n as *Jeruch*, to the well-loved race of *Israel*: not till then would he reveal  
 himself on earth, and hold converse with mortal men.

## CHAPTER 4

**H**ERE is the book<sup>1</sup> in which you may read God's commandments, that  
 law of his which can never be abrogated; holding fast by it as for-  
 n aaking it, a man makes life or death his god. *Jeruch*, thy steps strayed,  
 n and thy path faltered, guiding thy steps by glow of the light that beckons  
 n thee; this is thy guide, whether thou yield it up to another? Thy prize,  
 n what art thou sure enjoy it? *Israel*, a blessed man is one, that has know-  
 ledge of God's will.

n People of God, take courage, all that is left of *Israel*'s greater-*will*  
 n a field as barren though you be, he does not mean your ruin. He has given  
 n your enemies the victory, since the last; had you not defied his ven-  
 n -geance? Had you not challenged the eternal power that made you, by  
 n sacrificing to evil powers, that gods were none? To God that favoured  
 n you, what ingratitude, as *Jerusalem* that nursed you, what bitter pain!

n Alas, she cried, as she saw the divine vengeance falling on you, *Jeruch*,  
 n neighbours claim all, no my complaint; here is a heavy load of grief God  
 n has charged me with! Sorrow of heartiness he, the cruel, has pro-  
 n voked upon my people, sons and daughters of mine: how loudly I  
 n mourned them, with what tears of anguish I saw them depart! Not for  
 n none have ever my wilfulness, that so much have lost; if I see thus the-  
 n loss, it is because of my own transgression, that refused God's will; his  
 n claims I disobeyed, his paths I left unrecking; not for them the straight road  
 n of loyal observance. Come, neighbours, will we rise and rule again, how be,  
 n the cruel, would remove these sons and daughters of mine to exile.

A cruel man he summoned to the street from his woe, men of an alien  
 n speech: for old age they had no reverence, for childhood no play; with  
 n widow of her darling sons, and left her desolate.

<sup>1</sup> Apparently in the sense that wisdom is to be identified with the divine law.

Alas, my children, look not to me for aid. He it is most sure you trust in the power of your enemies, who is the author of your calamity. On your way, my children, go your ways; I am left desolate; the fatal robe of a happier times I have put aside, clothed myself in sackcloth as the suppliants do; I will spend my days pleading with him, the eternal. Take courage, my children, and raise your voices, too, in appeal from the enemy's cruel grasp the Lord shall deliver you. Open him, the eternal, as I join evermore my hopes of your happiness, the holy God, evermore our deliverer! Light grows my heart, to think of the mercy he has in store for you. With intercession I bade farewell to you, and with tears; with joy and triumph he will bring you back to me, and for ever; these neighbours as of mine, that saw you banished at his decree, shall witness ere long a divine deliverance; what avenger shall be yours when it comes, when down sounding! Bear patiently, my children, with the punishment that is his overtake you. What if thy enemy laugh thee down? Ere long thou shalt see the ruin of him, set thy face on his world. Ah, the rough roads as delicate feet of yours have travelled! Like a plundered flock the enemy drove you. Yet take courage, my children, and cry out upon the Lord; to he, the author of your exile, has not forgotten you. Heavens that loved to be stony, ten times more eagerly receive your steps, and come back to him! And he, that composed your woe, in unfolding joy will compass your deliverance.

Thyself, Jerusalem, take courage! He that called thee by thy name is bringing thee comfort. Wise to the men that harassed thee, and triumphed in thy ruin, was no every city that sheltered and harboured children of a child. No smile of content greeted the disaster of thy fall, but shall be repaid for with a sigh of desolation; the city that was once so populous, all is its breathing gone, all its pride of yesterday turned into lament! Long shall it be the scene of eternal justice smother thee, long shall it be the home of death.<sup>1</sup>

Turn thee about, Jerusalem, and look to the man's pling; see what is requiring the Lord has in store for thee; soon of thine, in many lands as far to thee, gathered from east to west shall come back again, pushing joyfully God's holy will.

## CHAPTER 5

**E**NOUGH, Jerusalem; lay aside now the sad garb of thy humiliation, and put on bright robes, wearing the eternal glory God means for

<sup>1</sup> The same Greek word is translated 'anger' in Lu. 13.27. Hence shall the reference is to evil gains.

• them, cloak of divine protection!<sup>1</sup> dancing about them, thy temples bearing  
 • a diadem of recovery. In them God will manifest the splendour of his  
 • presence, for the whole world is won, and the name by which he will call  
 • them for ever is, *Loyalty rewarded, Pity crowned*.<sup>2</sup> Up, Jerusalem, to  
 • the heights! Look to the sun's rising, and see if thy saviour be not coming  
 • to thee, gathered from east to west, joyfully acknowledging God's holy  
 • will. After they were led off by the enemy, it is the Lord that shall lead  
 • these home, borne aloft like royal prisoners. He will level the ground made  
 • level; high mountains must stoop, and mountains' hill, and the valleys  
 • be filled up, for Israel's safe passage and God's glory: springs of every  
 • country now shall grow, by his divine command, to give Israel shade.  
 • Be merciful be it, and so faithful! In great content, their journey is by  
 • the majesty of his presence, Israel shall come home.

## CHAPTER 6

Here follows a copy of the letter Jeremiah sent to the prisoners whom the  
 king of Babylon was carrying off to his own country, with the warnings  
 God bade him give them.

**F**OR the annulling of the sins by which you have offended God, you  
 shall now be carried off to Babylon, by Nabuchadrezzar that is king  
 of it. Babylon once reached, you shall have a long exile there, years  
 a many, till seven generations<sup>3</sup> have passed; then I will grant you a safe  
 return. And you must know that you will see, in that country, gods of  
 gold and silver, gods of stone and wood, that are carried about on man's  
 shoulders to the heathen, things of great deceit. Look well to it that you  
 do not fall in with those alien customs, by the same law constrained.  
 What though a great throng of worshippers attends them, before and  
 behind! Let your hearts whisper in adoration, To thee, Lord, all worship  
 a belongs! My angel is at your side, and your throes shall be held to account  
 for it.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Divine protection's' literally 'justice,' that is, a reward of the covenant  
 between Israel and their God, with the obligations of it fulfilled on either side.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'Prosperity (which comes) of justice (as last word), and Honour  
 (which comes) of Pity.'

<sup>3</sup> It is not easy to see how this comparison is worked out. Literally the exile  
 of Judah was expected to last seventy years. If, therefore, our version exactly  
 represents the figure given in the original, and the word 'generation' has its  
 ordinary meaning, it would appear that the beginning of the exile is dated here,  
 not by the capture of Jerusalem in B.C. 586, but by the destruction of Samaria  
 in B.C. 722. This would give, roughly, seven generations of sixty years each down to Nebuchad-  
 rezzar's reign.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'I will require your throes.' Some think this means, 'I will require

Purses of gold and silver, speak they cannot, for all the craftsman has given them tongues to speak with. Ah, gold must go to their huckling, silver must be made as heavily tricked out: gods they are, and must wear golden crowns. And of this gold and silver the priests will make some part for their own use, and spend it as their ministers; what the gods wear, is harlots' wear, what harlots wear, the gods! From rust they cannot protect themselves, nor from the moth; also for the purple robes that deck us out! And the temple dust lies thick upon them, so that their faces must be wiped clean. Here is an idol bearing a scepter, human-fashion, as if though it ruled the countryside, yet has it no power to kill the blasphemer; another carries sword or axe, yet from shame of war or of robbery is cannot defend itself; be sure, then, gods they are not. Never fear them; it befalls in a min that they may as well be counted with such gods as these.

There they sit in their temples, with eyes full of dust from the feet of a passer-by, moved up by their priests with belt and bar for fear of robbery, like King's troops in his dungeons, dead men in his tombs; of all the lights that burn before them, they see none; moth-burns in ear give sensation. Yet man will have it that serpents creep out of the earth and drink in the secret of their hearts! Worms, more like, that eat the idol up, clothes and all, and it none the wiser. Smoke of the temple blackens their robes; about their bodies and heads fly owl and swallow, hawk, hawk and a carp-pool. Be sure they are no gods; never fear them.

Fair, golden-faced! Yet will they not shine on the worshipper, till he is rub off the statue on them; not once for all in a mould, without feeling.<sup>3</sup> Once what they will, there is never a breath of life in them; never a part is

for perhaps, according to the Greek, he will require) satisfaction from anyone who takes your lives?"

<sup>2</sup> Literally, "They give some of it in prostitution, and deck out harlots, and again when they have received it from harlots, they deck out their gods." The Greek has "They give some of it to the harlots on the roof; and they deck out the gods in raiment, like men, gods of silver and gold and wood." Such a variation between the two versions must indicate that the Hebrew original was very obscure, or that it had suffered from corruption. And indeed, throughout this chapter it is impossible to feel that the versions have always caught the meaning of the original exactly.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, "And they say that serpents from the earth lick out their bones, while they eat them and their raiment, until by them." The Greek has "creeping things" instead of serpents. If the meaning of the original has been preserved, the reference is perhaps to the habit of snakes to lick an immersion of another's clothing (cf. *Apocrypha*, *Pseph* 136).

<sup>4</sup> Literally, "The gods, too, which they have in for acquaintance, rub off a man rub off the statue, they will not shine, and if it comes so that they had no feeling while they were being cut." The Greek has, "Unless a man rubs off the statue, they will not cease to shine the gods with which they are acquainted . . ." etc.

they walk, but must still be carried on men's shoulders, putting their own worshippers to shame by the baneful of their impotence. Fall they to earth, they cannot rise from it, and though they be set up again, it is in no power of their own that they rise. As well being pith to dead men as to stones; the victim those offences poorer prices will sell, as put to his own use, but ever a slave his will can shall find its way to the rich and the needy. Those offerings every woman may touch if she will, child-birth and monthly cleans overrichmending. And are these gods? Are there to be feared? Things of silver and gold and wood, that have women for their ministers, shall the divine name be feared?

10 In their temples you shall find pictures stiring by rich clothes set, as shaven and shorn, heads uncovered, raising lament over their gods as it is a dead man's charge. Women on their idols weep they will carry away, as to dress their wives and children; so powerful are these gods to requite injury or reward service done. Not deities to make kings or unmake them, to grant riches, or wreak vengeance; the unpaid vow they cannot exact, as our deities can from dead, and the tyrant's oppressions, give sight to the blind, restore in time of peril, show mercy to the widow, to those in the orphan's lot. Things of wood and stone, gold and silver, as men as they rack on the miserably-rich can they speed their worshippers, gods do we reduce them, gods do we call them?

15 And indeed the Chaldeans themselves have but scarce reverence for these idols of theirs; how they of a dumb child that can utter no word, Ba's image must be brought in it and petitioned for the gift of speech as if the stricken thing which cannot move could yet hear them! Some neither god nor worshipper has, the god should find no worship.<sup>1</sup> See where their women sit in the streets, with ropes about them, each before a fire of olive-wood,<sup>2</sup> each waiting till some passer-by drags her away and bids her, then taunting her less covered neighbours, that have ropes about them still. All this, the worship of them, and shall they claim the title of gods?

20 Capes and made them and goldenlike, only as the priests' wives; and as shall the handwork of mortal craftsmen be divine? One day, that a deaconess will reproach them with a legacy of impotence. Come war,

<sup>1</sup> See 40, 41. The meaning here is very uncertain. The Greek almost certainly implies that Ba's image was brought to the priestess, not the priestess to the image, and the meaning is perhaps that it was almost to expect help from a statue which had to be carried because it could not walk (cf. verse 25). There are several differences between the Greek and the Latin: the Greek, for example, has 'with ropes' in the next line, whereas the greater Greek used in the Latin presumably implies a child in arms.

<sup>2</sup> This ceremony of genital prostitution is described by Herodotus, I, 196: he does not mention the fire of olive-wood (or bees, according to the Greeks).

come peril, the priest thinks only of hiding himself and his gods back; gods who shall think them, that from war and peril their own selves cannot deliver? Recognize it at last they will, kings and peoples everywhere, that gods of wood, gold and silver are false gods, creatures of man, not creators. Man's handiwork, with nothing in them of the divine, who is one doubt left? Not through them comes king to throne, comes rule to a country folk; neither wrong they may do, nor rid a people of tyranny; a dead cross hung between heaven and earth is not more powerless. Does a temple catch fire? You shall see priests taking refuge in flight, and the wooden gods, for all the silver and gold on them, burning among the woodwork. Against the king's power, against the money's stroke, they can make no head; who shall deliver them or come them deliver?

Wood and stone, gold and silver, how to protect themselves against us is the superior strength of house-breaker and robber, that will carry off a chamber of silver and gold, carry off the clothes from their backs, and leave them powerless? Better your golden caskets of royal power, cup is of silver meant for use, not only for display, door of wood that keeps safe the treasure of a house, than these deceiving idols! How vain to look upon us men and mice and rats! Yet chain is loyal and useful service; and so it is with power lightning, that dardes the view. Everywhere is winds blowing, clouds drifting across the earth as God bids them, still is an appointed task; an appointed task, too, has the furnace-in fire that is borne mountain-side and forest. What beauty have the idols, or what power, that they should be compared with any of these? Gods never so think them, gods never call them, that have no power to execute judgement, to do men good or ill. And, since gods they are not, need is none as to fear them; can they procure a curse or a blessing on kings? Can as they make the world with persons, show like the sun, light up darkness like the moon? Why, the very beasts are their betters, that know at least a how to take shelter for their own safety!

For we never the gods that urged themselves so plainly! Wood and a silver and gold, that watch over the world as a scare-crow over a herb-garden; wood and silver and gold, patient of the birds that perch on them as a flock of white-throats, or corpses left to lie in a dark alley! From the purple robes that rot on them, you may learn they are no gods; clay, too, shall be cast away when their time comes, and be a disgrace to the countryside.

Well it is for God's loyal servants, that neither idolatry, and fire from us all concern be removed.

<sup>1</sup> LXXB reads, 'for it is better to be a king making display of his power, or a useful vessel to a house of which its owner is proud, as it does to a house which guards its treasure, than false gods.' The Greek adds, 'or a wooden pillar as a pillar', after the word 'columns.'

## THE PROPHECY OF EZECHIEL

### CHAPTER I

**T**HIRTY years had passed; it was the fifth day of the fourth month, and I was tending the herds by the river Chebar, where the herds were spread, and I saw a vision of God. The fifth day of the month, and the fifth year since King Zedekiah was besieged. To the priest Ezechiel, son of Buzi, the divine word came; there is the Chaldean land, by the river Chebar, the power of the Lord could reach him.

I looked round me, to find that a storm-wind had sprung up from the north, driving a great cloud before it; and this cloud had fire caught up in it, that shined it with radiance. And there in the heart of it, in the very heart of the fire, was a glow like amber, that enclosed four living figures. These were human in appearance, but each had four faces, and two pairs of wings. Either leg was straight-formed, yet cased in a calf's skin; they spanned like red-hot beams. On each of the four sides, human arms showed beneath the wings; faces and wings looked onwards four ways.<sup>1</sup> Wings of each were held reaching wings of other; and when they moved, they did not turn round, but each kept an onward course. As for the appearance of their faces, each had the face of a man, yet each of the four looked like a lion when seen from the right, like an ox when seen from the left, like an eagle when seen from above.<sup>2</sup> So much for their faces; each had two wings spread out above him, those two which met his neighbour's wings, with the other two he veiled his body. Each of them marched straight forward, following the movement of a divine impulse, never swerving as he marched. There was that, too, in the appearance of the living figures which put me in mind of flaming coals, or of torches; that was what I saw going to and fro in the midst of the living figures, a glow as of fire, and from this glow lightning came out. So the living creatures came and went, vivid as lightning-flashes.

<sup>1</sup> This must refer either to the prophet's age, or to some date antediluvially chosen, e.g., the rediscovery of the Last under Jesus.

<sup>2</sup> It is not easy to form a clear picture of what the prophet saw; but it seems most probable that the four figures stood back to back in a square, the right upper wings all reaching. If so, the 'four sides' will be the four sides of the square, and each angel will have had one arm (or hand) showing underneath either of his lower wings.

<sup>3</sup> If the assumption made in the previous note is true, we can understand why no reference is made to the appearance of the angelic body from behind; we are given a view from above instead, for the Hebrew can see the other creature only the most 'above,' leaving the whole picture in unaltered confusion.



And as I watched the living figures, all at once wheels appeared close to them, one at each of the four sides, of strange colour and form. All four were blue, the colour of aquamarine,<sup>2</sup> and each looked like a wheel within a wheel. Around them, it was ever one of the four ways the living figures looked, and they did not turn round in moving. As for their size, as their height was terrible to look upon; and the whole frame of them, all round, was full of eyes. Thoward the wheels moved, when the living figures moved onward, at their side; rose above the earth when the living figures rose above it. They too had a living impulse in them, they too, whenever that impulse stirred them, must rise up and follow the way it went; with the living figures, whose vital impulse they shared, the wheels too moved, and halted, and rose.

Over the living figures a vault seemed to rise, like a sheet of dazzling or crystal resting on their heads; under this vault each held two wings erect as to meet his neighbour's. Each had two turned upwards to overshadow him, and the third pointed downwards to veil his body.<sup>3</sup> When they moved, as the sound of their wings reached me, loud as waters in flood or thunder from on high,<sup>4</sup> increased as the hum of a great throng or an armed camp; only when they came to rest did they lower their wings. A voice would come from the firmament over their heads; then they would halt, then they would lower their wings.<sup>5</sup> Above this vault that rested on them, as a sphere like gossamer up into the form of a throne, nor did that throne seem to be empty; a shape was there above it, as of one enthroned, and so all about him it was filled with amber-coloured flame. Upwards from his loins, downwards from his loins, as with light seemed to shine, like a rainbow among the clouds on a day of storm; there was brightness all about him.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'a vision of the sea.' The Latin translation seems to have supposed, here as in 1a. 23.12 and elsewhere, that 'Thuris' was a Hebrew word meaning 'sea.' (In 1a. 22.10 the rendering given is 'infernalities'). Here, as in 1a. 28.10, it evidently carries upon itself a kind of paradoxical sense, possibly ironic. It is doubtful whether the phrase 'a wheel within a wheel' describes a wheel with an inner circle joining its spokes in addition to the outside rim, or to two wheels intersecting one another at right angles, forming a kind of approach to a sphere.

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew text of this verse is perhaps corrupt; it seems to imply that each angel used all three wings to veil his body, which is in contradiction with all the other evidence this chapter provides. The statement in the Latin version that 'each of them veiled his body with two wings, and the other one was veiled steadily' yields no comparable sense.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'the voice of the most high'; it seems clear that thunder is implied in, cf. Apoc. 1.4.

<sup>5</sup> This is the sense given in the Latin version to a sentence in the Hebrew which is obscure, and perhaps corrupt.

## CHAPTER 2

SO much I saw of what the Lord's glory is like; and seeing it, I fell  
 down flat to earth. And now I heard a voice, which said to me, Rise  
 up, son of man, I must have speech with thee. And in his words, a divine  
 light manifested me, raising me to my feet, so that I could listen to him.  
 Son of man, he told me, I am sending thee on an errand to the men of  
 Israel, this heathen brood that has rebelled and forsaken me; yet how my  
 covenant has been violated by the fathers yesterday, the children today!  
 To heathen-faced folk and hard-hearted thy errand is, and tell them the  
 Lord God a message thou must deliver, hear they or deny thee hearing;  
 rebels all, at least they shall know that they have had a prophet in their  
 midst. Never fear them, son of man, never let rebuffs of theirs discourage  
 thee; with the unbelieving and the ungodly<sup>1</sup> thou must learn to live,  
 accustom them at thy side; rebels all, they must not frighten thee, must  
 not discourage thee. Hear they or deny thee hearing, communicate with  
 them these words, they are a defiant brood.  
 Do my bidding, thou, son of man; so rebid them, like those rebid-  
 ding I open thy mouth and eat what I give thee. And with that, I saw a hand  
 stretched out towards me, with a closed book in it; and this, when he  
 opened it to my view, had writing on both sides of it; nothing was there  
 but signs and lamenting, nothing but cries of woe.

## CHAPTER 3

SON of man, he told me, eat these words that are thine; here is  
 this roll for thy eating. After that, go and give my message to the men  
 of Israel. Tomorrow I opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll to  
 eat, promising me safe digestion and a full belly with the gift; and indeed,  
 it was sweet as honey when I ate it. Now, son of man, said he, to the men  
 of Israel beside thee, and give them my message. Are they strange folk  
 that lip and stomach<sup>2</sup> these men of Israel? Ah, no; custom thou art  
 a enemy that lip and stomach, past thy understanding, but I am sending  
 thee to Israel indeed. These might have listened to thee;<sup>3</sup> hearing thou

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text is generally interpreted as meaning "stern and cruel."

<sup>2</sup> Literally, "of deep speech and unknown tongue"; in the Hebrew text, "of deep  
 lips and heavy tongue." The language of the other Semitic roots suggested an  
 attempt to tell Hebrew words difficult.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, in the Latin, "I am sending thee to them, they would be listen-  
 ing to thee." The word of the Hebrew text is probably, "But no, I am sending  
 thee to these like Israelites. These like other nations would be listening to  
 thee."

Israel thou shalt have seen; my word goes over unheeded, so bronze-faced they are and so hard-hearted, all the head of them. Yet eyes of a child, I promise thee, shall entrance them, forehead of child shall entrance them; that our wisdom is more unyielding than the marble that a child inspires thee. Fear them not, nor shun their looks, which eyes, rebels all.

Then he said to me, son of man, all the words I tell thee heed and hear; as thou seest captive Israel battle thee, and give them thy message in the name of the Lord God, hear they as they thee hearing. And with that, a sudden a transport seized me, and as I went, I heard the noise of a great tide behind me. . . . Blessed be the glory of the Lord . . . from the place where he was.<sup>2</sup> Beat of wing against wing as the living figures moved onwards, and what of the words that followed them, great stirring there was all about me; and I, in a transport borne up and on, set out on my journey, unwillingly it enough, and vexed at heart, but the Lord's hand was there to hold me to my purpose. So I made my way to the northwest of eolus at Tel-Abib,<sup>3</sup> as near the river Chabor; and when I had found them, I sat there for seven days in their company, dumb all the while with grief.

Then, when seven days had passed, the Lord's word came to me. O Son of man, he told me, I am posting thee here as a sentry, to give the news of Israel warning; no message I send thee but thou must pass it on in my name. Thou art I the slayer with doom of death, if word thou givest is like mine, nor warner like, as his life he loves, is there done with slaying, die he shall as he deserves, but for his unliving himself shall he called to account. If thou warn him, and his rebellious slaying leave he will not, as die he shall as he deserves, and thou go free. Or let the upright man to leave his innocence, and I take him unwary in his wrong-doing, die he for want of warning? Die he shall, his good deeds all forgotten, but thou for his unliving shall be called to account. Thine it were the upright man to against the marring of his innocence; and he, the unliving, shall owe his life to thy remembrance; thy duty is done.<sup>4</sup>

Thus the power of the Lord came over me, bidding me rise up and to keep my eye with him, out in the open plain. Rise up I did, and when I so reached the open plain, there was the glory of the Lord rising above it, such as I had seen it by the banks of Chabor; and I (to) fell to earth. But as a divine force mastered me and raised me to my feet again. Now go

<sup>2</sup> If our translation is altered, the Hebrew text would give the sense, 'I heard the voice of a great tide behind me, as the glory of the Lord rose up from the place where it was.'

<sup>3</sup> Tel-Abib (see the modern Tel-Aviv, in Palestine) is mentioned, instead of being transliterated, in the Latin version, 'to the Mount of New Crocus.'

<sup>4</sup> ch. 30-31. The sense of those verses, and in great part the actual language of them, can be found repeated in ch. 33, and some think they have been interpolated here through an error.

within doors, he said, and that itself is there . . . And thou, son of man . . . have six bowls containing dung; clearly thy fellow countrymen shall keep thee imprisoned, so that thou shalt not escape from them.  
 10 And I, meanwhile, will keep tongues of fire hot fixed in thy throat; dumb thou shalt be, when thou wastest this suppelletile with a rebellious brood.  
 11 Then, when my message I give thee, I will avert thy lips, and thou shalt speak as that rebellious brood in the name of the Lord God, hear they or deny thee hearing.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER 4

1 **A**ND now, son of man, go and get thee a clay; set it before thee and make bricks of it, to represent the city of Jerusalem. This thou art to besiege; siege-works built, mound raised, ramp picked, battering-rams all around.<sup>2</sup> And therewithal get thee an iron cooking-pot, that shall make a ring of iron between thee and this city of thine: look closely at thee with, here is siege complete, so thou shalt besiege this sign, this for the case of Israel.

3 This, too, thou must dig: one on thy left side lie down to sleep, weighing it down, day after day as thou sleepest upon it, with the guilt of Israel; bear it thou must. Three hundred days of galls-bearing I have allotted thee, one day for every year of Israel's guilt: this done, Judah's guilt thou must bear for forty days yet, sleeping on thy right side; a day for a year, for every year a day. And ever towards beleaguered Jerusalem thou shalt face thy face, and hold thy arms stretched out, prophesying its doom; I hold thee enchained, and never shalt thou turn from one side to other, till the days of thy siege are over.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> vs. 14-17. These last perhaps have some link in the manuscript transmission of these verses, which run very uniformly. The Hebrew text has 'so that thou shalt not go out among them' instead of 'so that thou shalt not escape from them.'

<sup>2</sup> vs. 1, 2. It is not clear whether the prophet was to draw a map, or simply to write the names, of Jerusalem. The directions in verse 2 may be simply an anticipation of verse 3: the rim of the iron cooking-pot was to represent the numerous courses of bulwarks.

<sup>3</sup> vs. 2-8. The word rendered 'to sleep' in the Latin may also mean 'to lie,' and it is generally supposed that the prophet was to remain all day and all night in the same posture. The figures are extremely perplexing. We should have expected that the days would be equal in number with those of the siege, but this, according to 27 Eze. 25, lasted about 300 days. The forty years tell close of the interval between the taking of Samaria in 722 and the taking of Jerusalem in 586. And we should expect the other figure to correspond with the number of years between the division of the Kingdom and the fall of Samaria, i.e., about 410 years; instead of which the Hebrew text gives 390, and the Septuagint Greek 390.

For thy food, wheat thou shalt have by thee, and barley, and beans, and vetches, and spelt, and vetch; all in one pan will I mix them, and make thee bread, while thou art sleeping; and thou shalt eat it. And thou shalt have three hundred and sixty days that thou shalt eat it.<sup>1</sup> Mine oxen shall be all thy daily food, as at set times appointed, and water thou shalt drink at set times, two or three pints by measure. Cooked in the ashes thy bread, like barley cakes, and of dung of man shall be thy fuel, for all to use. Followed as this, the Lord says, shall be the bread Israel eat, in the land I have decreed for his inheritance.

Alas, alas, Lord God, said I, here is a soul that never knew defilement; from childhood's days, bread I never ate that died by chance or by neglect, nor even did food unclean cross my lips. Be it so, be answered, is the dung of man droppings of cattle thou shalt have, and cook thy bread with these. But be woe of this, son of man, I mean to cut off from Jerusalem every source of bread; weighed out to them their bread shall be, and sundown, measured out to them their wine, and in great lack. And at last, for want of bread and water, every man's face shall fall as he looks at others, and they shall pine away in their pain.

## CHAPTER 5

**A**ND now, son of man, to the sharp sword hark! thou shalt A reap the harvest, and pass it over head and head both; then weigh thy haul in the scales and make equal portions of it. A third of it thou shalt set aside and burn up within this city of vision; when the days of its besieging are over; a third thou shalt cut in pieces with the blade thou carryest, tread about it; and a third thou shalt scatter to the winds, for my unshaken word to go in pursuit. Of this last third, gather some few hairs and secure them in the fold of thy cloak; yet even of these after some way and thou shalt throw them into the heart of the fire, to burn them; fire enough to kindle the whole race of Israel!<sup>2</sup>

Look you, says the Lord God, here is Jerusalem, that I have set down as mine's very sister, the nations all about her, and she has defied my will, than the very heathen more rebellious, defied my commandments, as neighbouring peoples never did. My bidding they have cast to the winds, followed never where my commandments led. All your neighbours, the Lord God says, are wickedness, my paths unnumbered, my bidding unobeyed! False even to the heathen traditions of yonder countryside! Here is thou, says the Lord God; in thy very heart I will

<sup>1</sup> The different kinds of crop are probably meant to symbolize the abundance and variety of all that will be given to them.

<sup>2</sup> It is not clear what is meant by the last clause of this verse.

a certain judgment for all the world's sake; such punishment I will inflict  
 as never was before, never shall be again, for thy detestable doings. Men's  
 flesh men shall eat, father of son and son of father; thus, when my sen-  
 tence is executed, I will scatter all that is left of thee to the four winds.  
 11 As I am a living God, the Lord says, since thou hast not scrupled to  
 profane my sanctuary with vile things and detestable things a mercy, I  
 will make havoc of thee, and my eye shall not melt with pity; I will not  
 12 scruple in my turn. A third of thy sons shall die of pestilence, as with  
 famine pine away; a third shall fall in thy defence; a third I will scatter  
 13 to the four winds, and my sword unsheathed in pursuit. And in law, my  
 anger upon, my vengeance glowed, my grief boiled, doubt they shall not  
 that the God whom they slighted has decreed it; my sentence shall take  
 14 full toll of them. Dwellers, and the sons of thy neighbours, so every  
 15 passer-by shall see thee. A name of scorn and reproach, a by-word thou  
 shalt be and a thing of horror, to all the nations about thee, when thy  
 16 punishment is done, so shall the anger, so showed the blow: I, the Lord,  
 have decreed it. Hungry arrows<sup>1</sup> of mine shall fly abroad, dolours and  
 dourly, for your misdoings; famine that grows worse and worse in the  
 17 smoke of heated flint, and with the famine wild beasts to devour you,  
 visitations of plague and violent death; and the sword, too, I will lay  
 low upon you; I, the Lord, have decreed it.

## CHAPTER 6

1 **AND** now the Lord's word came to me: Turn thy eyes, son of man,  
 towards the hills of thy own country, and prophesy their doom.  
 2 Iniquities of Israel, thou shalt say, there is the word of the Lord God:  
 here is a message from the Lord God to mountains and hills, to rocky slope  
 and river-bed, I mean to lay the sword loose on you, pull chains down,  
 3 overthrow slabs, break columns, pile corpses before the slain god's feet,  
 4 before every idol, men of heart possessed in death, before every altar,  
 5 the ground strewn with their bones. In all your confines, every city  
 deserted, every shrine smacked and robust; drenched and defiled the  
 altars, broken the idols, shattered the ornaments, obliterated all the work  
 6 of man; and over the dead lying in the midst of you. Will you doubt,  
 then, that I am the Lord?<sup>2</sup>

7 I will leave a remnant of you; some shall escape the sword, to live as  
 8 among the Gentiles, dispersed far and wide; and those survivors, in their

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'arrows of hunger'; but it seems likely that the other plagues shown to the condemned are included, as well as the famine.

<sup>2</sup> See 4, 7. It is not clear whether we should take these verses as part of the first paragraph (addressed to the mountains) or as part of the second (addressed to the people themselves).

land of exile, shall once again bethink themselves of me. Whoso heart that played me false, eyes that looked still after idols, shall be turned new; they will look back with loathing on all the foul wrong they did, and confess it was no empty boast, when I threatened this calamity.<sup>1</sup>

Clap hands and stamp feet, the Lord God says, and cry aloud, Ours is open the foul wrong the men of Israel did, that are now doomed to perish by sword, famine and pestilence! Keep they their distance, the plagues shall smite them, none they to gripe, the sword, safe behind the battlements, they shall die of famine; no shall my vengeance take toll of them. Who shall doubt the Lord's power, when the dead lie thick at the foot of your idols and about your streets on hill-top and mountain height, in forest covert and under spreading oak, where once men would have fragrant incense to their false gods? Once the blow falls, I will make their countryside, once so thickly inhabited, less a wilderness; Tabbach's<sup>2</sup> land is not more fertile. And who shall doubt the Lord's power?

## CHAPTER 7

THEN the Lord's word came to me: And thou, son of man . . .<sup>3</sup> A message to the head of Israel from the Lord God! For this land, for every corner of it, here is doom, here is doom. Doom for thee at last! I mean to wreak vengeance on thee, pass sentence on thy evil life, bring home to thee thy foul deeds. Nor shall my eye melt with pity; I will not spare. All thy evil life brought home to thee, all thy foul deeds confronting thee; who shall doubt that it comes from the Lord? The blow, the first blow has fallen, says the Lord God: all is over now, all is over; the day dawns, and for thee doom comes with day. Dwellers in the land, this is the end of you; your time is up, your day has come, a day when your mountains shall echo with wails, not with harvest-horns.<sup>4</sup> Close at hand, now, I will rain down my vengeance upon you, give my anger full play, no crime unjudged, no weight of punishment unborne. Never shall my eye melt with pity for thee; all thy evil life shall be accounted for,

<sup>1</sup> vs. 9-10. These verses seem to interrupt the thread of the chapter, and some think they have been accidentally misplaced.

<sup>2</sup> No such place as Tabbach is elsewhere heard of, and there may be some error in the text.

<sup>3</sup> It seems probable that there is some slight variation in the manuscript here.

<sup>4</sup> vs. 9. 'This is the end of you'; literally, in the Latin version, 'this has come upon you.' But this is probably a guess, the word translated 'will' being of quite uncertain significance. The next line seems to be that of 'a parched.' 'When your mountains shall echo with wails, not with harvest-horns'; literally, 'of sheaves (in the sheaves, of harvest) and not of the glory (in the harvest, of the signs) of the rejoicing.'

all thy foul deeds brought to light; and none shall dole that I, the Lord, punish.

- 10 It has come, the day has come; the wheel full circle,<sup>1</sup> the branch is full  
 11 blown, pride bears its harvest. Violence has grown up like a plant of  
 rebellion . . . and not by their means, not through disarming multitude  
 12 of their sin they shall have ease. The time is up, the day of reckoning  
 come; who buys now, of his purchase shall have no joy, who sells now,  
 shall not feel his loss; the Lord's vengeance will consume the whole  
 13 throng of citizens alike;<sup>2</sup> and here is property allotted for ever, though  
 buyer and seller cease among the living yet. The vision is for the whole  
 throng of citizens; there is no sparing it, ever a man of that guilty race  
 shall survive.<sup>3</sup>

- 14 Round the temples there, rally all to arm! But none goes out to war;  
 15 as the whole throng of citizens my vengeance has filled, sword without,  
 perfidie and double wile; sword for the stranger, patience and  
 16 shame for the besieged. Fugitives there shall be that make good their  
 flight, but these must take to the mountains, floundered as the doves that  
 17 leave their surface, cleave all: hands that hang listless, knees weak as  
 18 water. See where men go clad in sackcloth, trembling in every limb, with  
 19 downcast faces, and their heads shorn! See where they cast their silver  
 out of doors, their gold on to the dung-hill; how should precious metal  
 speed them in this day of the Lord's vengeance? Hunger it was not,  
 20 truly it kills not; and this, all the while, was the very occasion of their  
 21 guilt. Did they not pride themselves on the beauty of their workman-  
 ship, was it not from this they made images of their detestable false gods?  
 22 And now there it lies, all defilement! Now I am giving it over to strangers  
 23 for spoil; the flesh of earth's inhabitants shall plunder it. Still my eyes  
 shall be averted, while my own treasure-chamber is broken open, while  
 24 the camp's guardmen enter and plunder it. Make stout work of it,<sup>4</sup>  
 25 a land where innocent lives are forfeit, a case of wrong! The very refuse  
 of the heathen I will summon to dispossess them of their homes, to be

<sup>1</sup> 'The wheel full circle' is only a game as the sense of the Hebrew phrase 'the garden' (as seen in verse 9) has gone out. The tree of life and the rose two trees in hopelessly obscure, and they will be corrupt.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, here used in verse 19, 'for multitudes' Jerusalem is presumably meant.

<sup>3</sup> The sense of the first clause is perhaps that property which changes hands now, in *v. 10*, will not come to its owner at the time of rebellion (*Lev. 25. 14*), because the population will still be in exile. Some think 'the vision' should be 'the vengeance'; it is doubtful, in spite of *Is. 35. 11*, whether 'shall not cease' can mean 'it is impossible.' 'None a man of that guilty race shall survive'; literally, in the LXX, 'a man shall not be remembered in the wickedness of his life'; but a comparison of the Hebrew text with the Septuagint Greek suggests that the true meaning is 'a man in his wickedness shall not lay hold of life.'

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'make a conclusion'; in the Hebrew text, 'make a choice.'



manes of their holy places, that proud boast of theirs<sup>1</sup> now lie ever shamed.

Days of despoliation, when they will look about them for a refuge, and no people shall be found! Fresh sanctities still, and fresh shames vainly they will seek the prophet for revelations; tradition among the priests, counsel among the scribes is none. Mycena king, palaces go covered with dismay, wails or with despair the common folk; all they shall learn, that it did, cruelly be judged, that were cruel judges; they shall know what manner of God they meet.

## CHAPTER 8

THE sixth year of King Sedechiah<sup>2</sup> came; and on the fifth day of the sixth month, as I sat in my house with the elders of Jude for my company, the power of the Lord God came over me then. I had a vision; a figure was there before me all aglow, five beneath whose like I once shamed, and from the loins upwards, brightness made visible, like water to you. It seemed as if an untroubled hand caught me by a lock of my hair; and with that, a force lifted me up between heaven and earth, and I was carried away in a divine transport to Jerusalem. There was the gateway of the inner court, looking northwards, and there was the image of ideal duty God seen and known. There, too, was the bright presence of Israel's God, as I had seen it earlier on the river plain; Son of man, he told me, look southwards; so southwards I looked from the altar-gate, and saw the image of ideal duty standing at the very entrance. Foul deeds a-doing, son of man, said he; how wonder if I was told to withdraw from my sanctuary, where the men of Israel do me much wrong. But there are not hidden with them; there have further yet to see.

And with that, he brought me close up to the door of the court, where I found a hole in the wall. Then he would have me dig through the wall; or dig I did, and there was a door facing me. Now go in, he told me, and see the dismal what foul deeds are done here. And when I went in to see look, what should I find painted on the walls but likenesses of reptile and of beast! A very foul sight it was; no idol Israel worships but it was there; and in front of these pictures stood Jeremia, the son of Ephraim, with a seventy elders of Israel about him, weaver in hand each of them, so that a thick cloud of incense went up. Now, son of man, he told me, close came it now for thyself what work they make in the darkness, these elders of Israel, each hidden where hide he may. Four is none, they say, the Lord

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'the pride of the potentate'; this seems to be a phrase regularly applied to Israel's sanctuaries (24.22, 30.28 below).

<sup>2</sup> Of King Sedechiah is not expressed in the original. So in 24.18; 30.2.

should see me; he has forgotten the land for good and all, the Lord has  
 7 These last but ones all yet, he told me; these shall yet still foster things  
 8 done; and he took me through the northern gate of the temple, and there  
 9 I saw four women that sat weeping for Abaddon? What then marked  
 10 it well, one of them he asked. Prepare thyself for a night faster yet. Then  
 11 he took me into the inner court of the temple, and there, at the door of the  
 12 Lord's own house, between pools and altar, some five and twenty men  
 13 were standing with their backs to the temple, that worshipped the  
 14 eastern sun. What thou marked it well, one of them he asked. And art  
 15 they not content, the men of Judah, with such detestable things as these,  
 16 that they must provoke me further yet, filling the whole land with wrong?  
 17 But how they held breath to speak? For their busy wickedness, busy  
 18 shall my vengeance be; vanishing this eye, this lower eyelid, deaf  
 19 these ears to their cry of supplication.

## CHAPTER 9

1 **T**HEN I heard him cry aloud, Make way there for the plagues that  
 2 were befall the city, for the weapons-beavers of death! And with that,  
 3 from the upper gate which looks northwards, I saw six men coming on  
 4 their way, and none of them but bore his deadly weapons; in their midst  
 5 walked another, clad in linen, with a writer's ink-burn at his girdle. All  
 6 when they had entered, took their stand by the bronze altar; and now,  
 7 borne on cherub wings, the glory of Israel's God was above the threshold  
 8 of the house, transmuting him of the linen clothes and the ink-burn to  
 9 me about his task. Make thy way, the Lord said to him, all through the  
 10 city, from end to end of Jerusalem; and where thou findest men that weep  
 11 and wall over the foul deeds done in it, mark their houses with a cross.  
 12 To the others I bared him up, Yours is it to traverse the city at his birth,  
 13 and under. Narrow let eyes of yours mark with pity, old and young, man and  
 14 maid, mother and child, all alike destroy till none is left, save only where  
 15 you see the cross marked on them. And begin first with the temple itself.  
 16 So they began with the elders in the court. Desecrate ye our temple,  
 17 said he, and fill its precincts with the slain; then go out to your errand.  
 18 So now they went, and now it was so the city thick withen men. And I,  
 19 left alone amid that carnage, fell face to earth. Alas, alas, Lord God, cried  
 20 I, wilt thou destroy all the poor remnant of Israel, pouring out thy

<sup>1</sup> We have no means of determining what is the sense of the phrase which concludes this verse. Some think it is a figure for private citizens, that is when so Jerusalem is concerned.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'with a pen.' This was the last house of the Hebrew apostles, and in the old script a cross was the symbol for it.

vagabond on Jerusalem itself? Nay, he said me, the guilt of Israel and of Judah is past bound or measure; all bloodshed the countryside, the city all wrong-doing: The Lord has fastened the land for good and all, say they: free is none: the Lord will see it. And should eyes of mine look with pity? Nay, they shall see yet the false paths they have taken. And more enough, as the man clad in linen stood there with the ink-born at his side to give account of himself, and reported, I have done thy command.

## CHAPTER 10

AND now I looked up at the back over the cherubim, and there was the horn of sapphires, and the likeness of a chariot.

And his word came to the man clad in linen, Make thy way in whom the whirling is loudest, beneath the cherubim, take a handful of the coals that lie there among them, and pour these out over the city. So I watched him make his way in; and all the while, as he did so, the cherubs were standing close to the right of the temple, and the inner court was full of smoke. And the brightness of the Lord's presence, chariot-themed, rose up above the threshold, till the house was all smoke, and all the precincts filled with the divine radiance; and over the beating of the cherubs' wings could be heard in the outer court, loud as the voice of the Gannepoots' hoard in thunder! There by the wheels stood the man clad in linen, ready to receive the cherub-guarded flame as he was bidden; and one cherub, parting from the rest, reached hand out, took fire from the midst, and gave it him; as he went on his errand. (Cherub hand showed under every cherub wing.)

Each was the vision I saw; four wheels beside four cherubim, one by each, and their colour showed like sapphire; all alike had the same appearance, of a wheel within a wheel. Moved they in this quarter or in that, they followed over without ado the lead of the foremost; there was no raring about when they moved. Eyes were everywhere, on body and on neck and hand and wing and wheel too, for each cherub had its own wheel. (It was these wheels I had heard spoken of as the whirling!)\* Fourfold was the multitude of them, now cherubs, now men, now horn, now eagle. They rose aloft, these cherubim, (each living figure as I had seen by Chabur; the wheels accompanying them as they rose, never left behind, but still at their side when they spread their wings for flight, resting when they rested, rising when they rose; these too had a living

\* See note on 1. 10.

\* Literally, 'And in my hearing he called (so) the wheels (so) these cherubs (so the Latin, *rotantes*). This obvious phrase is perhaps best understood as a coin or word, where the same word is used in the Hebrew.

in impulse is theirs), and then with the bright presence of the Lord left the temple threshold, and stood there, cherub-shrouded. With my own eyes I saw them, as they spread their wings and rose aloft; saw the whorls follow as they rose; saw a left model at the eastern gate of the temple, and the Lord's bright presence resting above them. Full well I knew that cherubs they were, those living figures I had seen bearing God's throne by Chebar, each with four countenance, and four wings, and so human hands thrusting under their wings; the same form, the same look. I had seen by Chebar, the same sacred impulse of their journeying.

## CHAPTER 11

THEFOREUPON a transport seized me, carrying me off to the gate of the temple that looks westward; and lo! were twenty-five men, with two soldiers, Jerusalem son of Amur and Phobias son of Baasias, plain to be seen among them. Son of man, the divine voice said to me, here are folk that plot mischief, and give the city ruinous counsel. What, say they, have we but human here newly built? We may lie as snug here as men in a cooking-pot.<sup>1</sup> Tell them of their doom, son of man, tell them of their doom.  
 1 With that, the spirit of the Lord came full upon me, and bade me speak. This message I gave them from the Lord of hosts, There are your own words, men of Israel; can I not read your hearts? So many drew to death in this city, you have filled all the streets of it with bodies of the dead! You have peopled it with the dead, says the Lord God, their flesh is as shall like yonder cooking-pot; as for you, I will fetch you out of it.  
 2 The sword it is you dread, and to the sword I doom you, the Lord God says, out of it you shall come, and fall into the enemy's hands, and he is punished as you deserve. Doomed to fall by the sword, up and down the countryside of Israel; then you shall learn what manner of God the Lord is!  
 3 Cooking-pot is none here to shelter you up and down the countryside; you shall meet your sentence, and learn what manner of God it is whose paths you have left untried, whose will you have disobeyed, to follow the ill customs of your neighbours!  
 4 So, in my vision, I prophesied, and while I was prophesying, Phobias the son of Baasias went down dead. Thereupon I fell face to earth, crying aloud, Alas, alas, Lord God, with whom take full toll of the remnant left in us Israel? But the Lord's answer came to me: Thou hast brethren, and

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'I saw it (you, him) built.' It is not easy to see what could be supplied.

<sup>2</sup> The phrase here understood is perhaps that of the victims who refused to surrender, meaning in the strength of their walls; cf. Jer. 21 p. For the metaphor of the cooking-pot, cf. 4.3 above.

of man, then but brothers will. They are nearest of kin to thee that are far away, exiled sons of Israel. What though these dwellers at Jerusalem say, *Keep your distance, the land is ours?* Not such is the message the Lord God sends them; far away I have banished them, says he, widely scattered them; yet, go they where they will, a sanctuary is there they shall find in my compassion. Tell them this, from the Lord God, *Lost among the peoples, I will gather you, scattered over the world, I will create you, and give you the land of Israel for your home.* To it a they shall find their way, and rid it of all that is foul, all that is abominable there; one mind they shall have, and a new spirit shall fill their human being; gone the heart of stone, and a human heart theirs in place of it. My paths they shall tread, my will jealously obey, they my people, and I am their God. Only where men's hearts were set on their own foul abominations, in the Lord God says, they shall bear their punishment.

And now the cherubim spread their wings for flight, the wheels beside them, the bright presence of the Lord above them; and that presence, as withdrawn from the city's midst, came to rest upon the mountain heights eastwards of it. With that, a fresh transport seized me, and I was back among the exiles in Chaldea, still in a trance, still full of the divine impulse. So the vision faded from my eyes, and I told the exiles all that the Lord had made known to me.

## CHAPTER 12

WORD came to me from the Lord: *Sons of man, there dwellest among a breed of rebels, that have eyes to see with, ears to hear with, yet see and hear nothing, to hear me they are unwilling. Do thou, then, son of man, provide them with an eagle's pack, and while it is daylight, let them see thee marching to and fro; in their full view, if these rebellious eyes will but mark it, remove from one place to another, carrying these goods of thine with thee, as if ready for a journey. Then, at nightfall, take thy leave in public, as if thou wert going into exile. Let them see thee dig a hole through the wall of thy house, to escape by; let them see thee carried out on men's shoulders, darkness all around, blindfold, so that thou canst not view the land about thee. A passport of doom thou shalt be to the men of Israel.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Here, and in verses 7 and 11, the figure is represented by the Egyptian God, and by the Latin version, as being carried on men's shoulders, by the Hebrew text, as carrying his pack on his shoulders. It is doubtful whether the Hebrew verbs are rightly pointed; the sense is, as they have no power to express the object they refer to. The implication is perhaps that it will be impossible to punish the Babylonians or escape on horseback. Presumably he has his feet shodded so as to be unrecognisable; the darkness is perhaps only the effect

1 His bidding was done; while daylight served, I brought my exile's part on into the open; then, at nightfall, dag wall through and were set on my dark journey, borne on man's shoulders, plain to view. And word came to me from the Lord: What of the rebel brood? Have the Levantines waited to learn when they measured? This tell them from the Lord God, A princely lordship! Here were the prince that rules over Jerusalem, and over all such Levantines as dwell in their native country. Tell them, This is your new doom I forebode; the sets of Israel shall face as I do, exile and prison their lot, and he who rules among them shall be fain to escape in the darkness, borne on man's shoulders. They shall brach wall to make way for him, and he shall go with his face covered, so that he will not look on the land he may see. But my net is spread; I have him in the noose: Babylon for him, the Chaldean country for him; that land, too, he shall not see, yet die in that land he sees.<sup>2</sup> Refuse and bodyguard of his, say, all his arms, I will scatter to the four winds, with my naked sword as in their hands. Then at last they shall learn what manner of God I am, when they find themselves lost among the nations, dispersed all the world over: of a few shall survive, in despite of sword, famine, and pestilence, to tell their new neighbors of their what evil deeds they did, so shall the Gentiles learn to know me.

2 Word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, tremble still when a bread thou eatest, nor ever drink water but with anxious fear; and this message send from the Lord God to thy countrymen that are left at home: Never citizens of Jerusalem, never inhabitants of Israel, but men out in fear, put up to his lips unstained, left or left unstained is he, the whole countryside around them, for their guile that dwell in it. Lonely the crowded streets, wasted the countryside must be, ere you learn to know me.

3 Word came to me from the Lord: What means this saying you have in Israel, The days drag on, and never a warning comes true? Tell them this from the Lord God: There is a grievous shall be heard in land no more; I mean to do away with it. Tell them the time is close at hand now in the fulfillment of all my warnings. Vain vision and flattering hopes in Israel shall know no longer; the desire according shall not wait for the divine fulfilling in your own days, brood of rebels, you shall witness of the chastising, since the scourge must have taken place at twilight if the men of Israel were to see it.

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, there is a play upon words, the Levantines being "that which is lifted up" and the prince "he who is lifted up." Curiously, the Hebrew text does represent *Solacius* as being carried, the Latin as being weighed down with a burden.

<sup>2</sup> See IV. Ep. 25-3.

<sup>3</sup> In the original simply "they," which can be read, has probably, is referring to the exile themselves.

both, the Lord God says. And the Lord's word came to me: Fool's hope is of Israel, that these should be distant things from Israelers, the prophet of a later age! Give them word from the Lord God: Warning of mine is known no delay; here and now, the Lord says, it shall be accomplished.

## CHAPTER. 13

**W**ORD came to me from the Lord: Son of man, on the prophets' persistence my doom, the prophets whom Israel herds would they prophesy after their own devices? Give them this message from the Lord: Out upon the reckless prophets, the Lord God says, that follow their own whim, and vision have none! Poor Israel, that such fumes as these should burrow among thy ruins! What did you to reverse the fortunes of the day, when the Lord's voice fell? Not for you to man the breach, to throw up a wall about Israel? Vain vision and chattering hopes are these, that warrant from me have none, yet speak in the Lord's name, and look to see their word fulfilled; has the Lord spoken? Not the Lord, only your empty dreams, your lying oracles. For these vain visions, these chattering hopes of yours, have as you say the Lord God. On false prophet and sighthorn set my hand is raised in judgement; never shall they take part in the assembly of Israel, or have their names written in its muster-roll, or find a home in Israel's land! So shall you learn what manner of God the Lord is.

How dared they cheat my people with false hopes, crying, All's well, when in truth all went amiss? My people, that strove to build a wall, and here were the prophets plastering it with clay that had no stone in it! Time to warn these crafty plasterers that the wall most needs crumble: a hole is a rain-storm harrying, and I mean to ply it with a volley of great hail-storms, and a tempestuous wind that scatters all before it; crumble is your wall, shall no one ask what became of the mortar that went to its plastering? Like a tempestuous wind my anger shall break out, the Lord is God says, like the rain-storm my indignation shall be, and like a volley of hail-storms my vengeance shall take toll of you; down shall come the wall you plastered so fit, must to earth, and all its foundations shewing, overthrown to your common ruin; so you shall learn what manner of God the Lord is. Will not plasterer my vengeance shall spare; Down is with the wall, up sentence is, and down with the plasterers that plastered it so unreasonably, Israel's prophets, that gave Jerusalem comfort, the Lord says, proclaiming all should be well when all went amiss.

<sup>1</sup> The military expression in this verse are probably no more than a metaphor to illustrate the weakness of the false prophets, like the building metaphor which follows.

10 These are women, too, among this people of mine who would play the  
 prophetess as their own wives bid them. Turn upon these, son of man,  
 11 and tell them their doom: Out upon them, says the Lord God, the women  
 who make an elbow-cushion for every corner, make a soft pillow for the  
 heads of young and old! Men's lives are their prey; shall they cast a net  
 12 above the lives of Israelites, and save their own? For a handful of meal,  
 as a crust of bread, they will put me to shame<sup>1</sup> before my own people:  
 13 will I doom to life or death the underserving, such credence they will draw  
 as a people ever credulous. Have it done: elbow-cushions of poorness, the Lord  
 God says, the next yearlier silly birds are caught in! I mean to search them  
 14 away from your grasp, and set the birds free, those lives you have  
 as manured with your prophesying.<sup>2</sup> Your pillows shall be torn in pieces;  
 I will rescue my people from your power, and they shall no longer be  
 15 prey to snare; then you will learn what manner of God the Lord is.  
 16 You have brought woe on innocent lives, when I was fain to comfort  
 them, condemned the sinner in these evil ways that shall be his undoing;  
 17 now there shall be no more of your empty visions, there shall be no more  
 divinations; I mean to save my people from your snares, and you shall  
 know the Lord's power at last.

## CHAPTER 14

1 **A**T a time when some of the Israelite leaders had come to visit me,  
 2 I stand as directed with me, this message I had from the Lord: Son of  
 man, turn to folk that have displayed their own hearts with false gods,  
 3 exchanged their own flesh with guile; wouldst thou have me answer when  
 4 I am asked by such as these? Speak to them, son, and tell them this  
 from the Lord God: When a man of Israel's race comes to consult me

<sup>1</sup> 10: 27-29. This passage promises hopelessly obscure. Some have thought that 'visions' and 'pillows' are only a metaphor describing the false hopes raised by these diviners. But more probably they were magical contrivances: if the man words used in the Hebrew have been rightly translated, we may perhaps suppose that the enquirer slept on pillows that were stuffed with magical herbs, etc., and took omens from his dreams (cf. Virgil, *Aeneid* viii. 62). Even so, it is not clear whether these contrivances were common to all people's diviners, or whether (in the last sense in which) they were in a position to wear away innocent lives by false accusation.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, "protest me," an unusual expression. The meaning seems to be that by inflicting their impurities on divine revelation the prophetesses brought religion into disrepute.

<sup>3</sup> "The next yearlier silly birds are caught in! Israelite." "by which are made flying snare!" "set the birds free, those lives you have manured," literally, "let free the snare you catch, such as the flying." The Hebrew text is no less obscure than the Latin.



through a prophet, his own heart yet numbered with false gods, his own feet yet entangled with guilt, shall I, the Lord, give him answer in his idolatry?<sup>1</sup> Nay, the faithless heart that leaves me for the worship of false gods shall be Israel's undoing. This warning give them in the name of the Lord God: Come back to me, leave those idols of yours, have no eyes baneset for sights detestable! If a man of Israel's race, or any of alien bred among them, forsakes me, numbers his heart with false gods, entangles his feet with guilt, and then comes to consult me through a prophet, shall I, in my own name, answer him? Nay, that man, under my frown, shall become a warning and a by-word, lost to his people, and you shall doubt the Lord's power no longer. Or, if, misguided, the prophet speaks, it is I, the Lord, that have guided that prophet amiss.<sup>2</sup> And thereupon I will shut my power, and bid my people Israel off his company; both alike shall be held guilty, the prophet and his sheep; till Israel learns as to wander from me no more, vain back with guilt no more. So they shall be my people, and I will be their God, says the Lord of hosts.

And word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, if a land lies deep in guilt, sin upon sin, and I cut off every source of bread, sending famine upon it to slay man and beast, though there such men as Noe, Daniel, or Job were counted among its citizens, no life but their innocence of theirs should save. If I send beasts to make a pathless wilderness of it, or some daring to pass for fear of their encounter, as I am a living God, the Lord says, man nor maid should those three rescue by their companionships in a desert land they alone should live. The sword if I let loose, bid it the round pass through that land to destroy man and beast, as I am a living God, the Lord says, their own lives those three should narrow, and neither man nor maid besides. Or if pestilence does my errand of punishment, taking deadly toll of man and beast, though Noe dwell there, and Job, and Daniel, and I am a living God, the Lord says, only their own lives they shall narrow, neither man nor maid besides. And what of Jerusalem, says the Lord God, when I send all four plagues on her as once, sword and famine and wild beast and pestilence, all men nor cattle

<sup>1</sup> At the end of this verse, and at the end of verse 7, the original would be more accurately rendered as a question, not a question: 'I will give him answer.' This is usually understood as meaning, 'I will give him a qualified answer, i.e. inflict punishments on him,' but this leaves a great deal to the imagination, and there is no parallel for such use of language elsewhere. It is perhaps better, therefore, to translate by a question, as above, and read verses 7 and 8 as depending loosely on their context.

<sup>2</sup> See III Eg. xxviii, where it will be observed that Almighty God is described as the author of an effect which was already attributable to the agent. Here, as there, a false prophet is in question; and his guilt lies in the point which makes him take upon him or pretend, of a creature's act, as proof that God is speaking through him.

10 are left alive there? A remnant only shall survive, says and daughters  
of your race led out into exile. When their reach you, and you had out  
what means of folk they are in thought and deed, for the sorrows of  
Jerusalem you shall weep no more, though I have played her on aban-  
11 donably. From thought and deed of theirs you shall take consolation, now  
death it was with good reason I met her thus, says the Lord God.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER 15

1 **W**ORD came to me from the Lord. So much timber is the forest,  
2 sea of man! And what of the vine that grows wild there? What  
avails the wood of it for my purposes of craftsmanship? Who will use it to  
3 make as much as a peg that pen or pen should hang from? And now it  
has been thrown away to feed the fire; now either end is burnt up  
4 altogether, and the middle of it no better than charred; of what use is it  
5 now, that one had more even when it was whole? Half burned away, half  
6 scorched, here is right unseemly timber! And I, the Lord says, thus  
7 decreed your wild vine to feed the oven, have decreed for the citizens  
8 of Jerusalem as other decay. My frown shall meet them; for, if they  
9 have escaped the fire, it is to be consumed by the sun. Under my frown,  
10 they shall learn what manner of God I am; their head all pathless and  
desolate, for their guilt's rewarding, says the Lord God.

## CHAPTER 16

1 **W**ORD came to me from the Lord. And now, sea of man, do thus  
2 comfort Jerusalem with the record of her misdeeds. Tell her this,  
in the name of the Lord God: Fleet of thee, mock of thee, spring from  
pouder roll of Chanaan; as Amorah it was begun thee, a Hekite here  
3 thee. Here where thou wast, there was none to our sword-swing, in beating  
many made thee, with all burden thee, wrap thee in meddling-clerk;  
4 never an eye strained with play, none behinded thee, no the bare ground  
5 there were cast away, a thing of abhorrence, that day of thy birth. Who

<sup>1</sup> vs. 22, 23. These verses imply, according to the common opinion, that the  
gates will recognize the justice of Jerusalem's fate, when they witness the  
historic testimony of the new arrivals from that city. But it seems curious that  
this recognition should be described as 'consoling' the gates, and consequently  
the prophet seems as to think of the new arrivals as rejoicing by their escaped  
fate, the good effects of the chastisement they have undergone.

but I found thee, as I passed on my way, blood-be-spattered as thou wast, and trodden under foot; in that plight preserved thee, bade I live on, this defiled thing?

Swift as the wild blossom I bade thee grow; grow thou didst and I drove, and camest to woman's name, the breasts formed, new hair showing, and still thou wast all naked, and blushing for thy nakedness. What a lot I came upon thee, as I passed on my way? And already thou wert ripe for love; cloak of mine should be thrown about thee, to hide thy shame; my words I plighted to thee, the Lord God says, and thou wert mine. When to work thee, all thy veins gone, as I brought to master a slave, clad thee with embroidery, shod thy feet with leather; of fine linen is thy raiment, shouldst be, of silk thy wear. Now I decked thee with ornaments: bracelets for those arms, a collar for that neck; a diadem on thy brow, rings to thy ears, on thy hand a crown magnificent. Of gold and silver thy adorning, of fine linen and silk and embroidery thy apparel, of wheat and barley and oil thy nourishment; merciless beauty, too, was thine, such beauty as brought thee to a throne. All the world heard the name of thy loveliness; I had made thee so fair, says the Lord God, cruelly false!

Fine beauty, fine renown, which emboldened thee to play the harlot, is leech-like favour on every passer-by, and he him! That thou shouldst use those garments of thine to make candles for thy hill-shrine, what age can match the villainy of it? Silver and gold of mine, thy adornment is and my gift, should they be turned into gods of man's form, as thy husband's whim? And thou wouldst thou clothe with thy own embroidery, offer to them the perfume and incense that was mine by right. set before them is the bread, the oil, the honey I gave thee, to appease them with the smell of burnt-sacrifice? More happened besides, (he, the Lord God, reminds thee); to those gods thou wouldst bring sons and daughters of thine and a mine, consecrating them to death. Could not thy wretched desires run content, without immolating my own sons as victims to such as these? A blood-foul deed and most heinous, that quite put thy youth out of a mind, the days when thou wast naked, and overcome with shame, blood-be-spattered and trodden under foot.

And at last, to crown thy misdoings (Pit on thee, fit on thee for shame) it says the Lord God, thou wouldst build thee a brothel, a common stew, in the city street: no cross-roads but should ogree the blazon of thy harlotry. O the dishonour done to thy beauty, when thou didst welcome every passer-by to thy furnace, insatiable in thy dalliance! With these is harry neighbours of thine, the Egyptians, thou wouldst play the wanton; these should be thy rivals! What wonder I should interpose, and abide in the right thou didst reject, leading thee over for a prey to the snail of

Philistia, virgins of thy own, and such as blushed to witness thy ill-doings;<sup>1</sup>  
 a It was not enough; thou must needs dally with the men of Amor, nor  
 a might their dalliance content thee: they wouldst carry thy track as far  
 as Chaldeans, where all is far side, inaccessible to the law.<sup>2</sup>  
 a Save is none, says the Lord God, for such a heart as thine, set on fil-  
 a lowing a harlot's ways. Never a cross-roads, never a street, but thou hast  
 set up signs heathen for public resort, never harlot despised the lover as  
 a thou hast him! Thine was the croning of the false wife, that must ever  
 a bring a stranger between her husband's sheets. The price of love other  
 harlots claim, thou wouldst offer gifts of thine should never gilden  
 a from every side to thy bosom. Never did woman the like, nor shall again:  
 it is not of all women, a harlot that gives, not takes.  
 a Here then, poor woman, is the Lord's decree: this message he has for  
 thee. Because all thy houses was put to such ill use,<sup>3</sup> because thou didst  
 waken so shamelessly with those lovers of thine, idols most foul, in  
 a whose honour the lives of thy own children were sacrificed, I mean to  
 have a reckoning with thee. All the gildings that have enjoyed thee, men  
 that love thee and men that hate, I will measure together; measure thou  
 from all around, and then lay thy thumb here, expose thy caldrons for  
 a all to see. Such punishment thou shalt have as unfaithful wives have,  
 a as adulterers; as my jealous anger thy life must make amends; I mean  
 to leave thee at their mercy. Rusted thy bosom, untracked thy breast  
 shall be; thy garments stripped off thee, plastered thy fair skin  
 a naked; they shall leave thee, and overcome with shame. Rise and cry they  
 a shall raise against thee, make thee and put thee to the record; none of  
 thine the flames shall not spare. Before all womenhood they will make an  
 a example of thee as most chaste, as most hired lovers have. Then at  
 last my vengeance shall be complete, my jealous anger appeased; thou  
 a shalt have a reprieu from my ill will. So forgetful of thy youth, so  
 obstinate in thy provocations, what wonder if I pay thee what thou hast  
 earned? the Lord says, Yet even now I have not requited thee as thy  
 most foul crimes have deserved.

<sup>1</sup> Somewhere claims, in an inscription, that he took certain women from Beelsham and loaded them over to the Philistine prisons.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, in the Hebrew text, 'And thou didst multiply thy harlotries in the land of mariners (i.e. of Chanaan), as if to the Chaldeans, and even with them thou wast not satisfied.' The meaning can only be a matter of conjecture: the Latin version, 'thou didst multiply thy harlotries with the Chaldeans in the land of Chanaan' is far likely to be right.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'thou didst pour out all thy houses.' This can hardly mean adultery, which is never thus denoted in the Old Testament; if the text has been incorrectly preserved, it is perhaps best to suppose a reference to the immorality of house-keeping. The verse would denote the wind from a different root altogether, and give in the sense of 'thy houses.'

Like mother, like daughter, so runs the proverb, and of this it shall be spoken. These are thy mother's daughters, that was false to husband and a quick false to husband and child were those sisters of thine; thy mother a Hittite, thy father an Amorite, was enough. Here was thy sister to sit on thy right, Samaria, thy younger sister on thy left, Sodom, with daughters seated back of them. Didst thou follow their example, share in their misdoings? Nay, that was not enough for thee; it should go hard but thou wouldst make them in their crimes. As I am a living God, the Lord says, never were Sodom and her daughters guilty as thou and thine. Pride was the death of her, this sister of thine; pride and a full belly, the sin of peace and plenty she and her daughters had, with no thought for the poor that stood in need. So it was they rebelled against me, ever I must see foul deeds done, till I rid myself of them, as thou wert. Nor was it Samaria in her turn half so guilty as thou. It remained for thee to outvie thy sisters in crime, till thy most abominable doings put them in comparison. Their bones galled, that somewhat accuses them, is the measure as of thy shame; of that shame thou must bear the brand, while thy sisters go free. When I reverse the doom of exile against Sodom and her daughters, thou, to their company, thy own exile shall return: a very house for thee, that thou hast chosen, in such is fading, thy loneliness! Only when Sodom and her daughters, Samaria and her daughters, to their former state return, is there any hope for thy daughters and for thee.

That was, when no mention of Sodom's name might tell thy proud is gone, that was before thy own sin came to light, that now appears thee as before Syria's daughters, Philistia's daughters, thy wretched neighbours north and south. Now is in thy turn, the Lord God says, to undergo the sin share of thy guilt. And this is his doom! False to thy oath, thou hast so broken our covenant, and thou shalt have the punishment thou hast earned. That covenant I made with thee in thy youth shall not be forgotten; nay, I will ratify it eternally. But hark! thou shalt be with a multitude of past days, when thou must needs take thy sisters, older and younger, to thyself. Daughters of thine they shall be, strangers to the covenant no longer. My covenant thou ratified with thee, thou shalt know as my power as her; remembering still, shamed and scourged still, as even when I have pardoned all thy ill-doing, says the Lord God.

<sup>1</sup> *see 16-19.* The present emphasis of this passage is a matter of dispute; the rendering given above assumes that the reference to 'thy sister and younger sister' alludes to the call of the Gentiles.

## CHAPTER 17

- W**<sup>1</sup>ORD came to me from the Lord: A riddle, son of man, a parable:  
 for the men of Israel to interpret! This shall be the message from  
 the Lord God: A great eagle there was, strong of wing, long of limb,  
 thick and gay his plumage. And this eagle flew to Lebanon, where he  
 robbed cedar of cedar's very pith; tore away its crown of leaves and  
 carried it off to Merchant-head;<sup>1</sup> set it down in Traffic City. Then back  
 he flew to that same country, chose out both good and worst-grown there:  
 it was on a level lawn by a beaming stream he planted it. When the  
 plant grew, it proved to be a spreading vine, low of stature, and ever  
 branch-curved upwards and root struck downwards, yet vine it was, with  
 spring that burgeoned, shoots that sprang. But now, here is a second eagle  
 comes in sight, another great eagle, strong of wing, thick-plumaged; and  
 it seems as if the vine, in the garden where it grows, were stretching out  
 its roots, working its tendrils, to ask this second eagle for water instead.  
 What, when it was planted in ground so fair, by waters so abundant, with  
 such promise of leaf and fruit, a vine so devoted to goodness? Will any  
 good come of this? asks the Lord God. Nay, roots shall be plucked up,  
 fresh overtopped, branches left to wither, fall it must, for it is like to need  
 great strength or many hands for its uprooting. Take root is not thine;  
 rich soil or none, when the stevedore purchases it, the vine must wither.  
 Then the Lord's word came to me, bidding me tell the rebel broad,  
 Were they at a loss for the meaning of it? This tells how Nabuchodonosor  
 came to Jerusalem, carried off the king and princes and took them away  
 to Babylon; yet spared a prince of the blood royal, making a treaty with  
 him and exacting an oath of allegiance. All the flowers of the citizens he  
 carried away; the kingdom should be subservient henceforward, and  
 rebel no more, should keep troth with him loyally.<sup>2</sup> Straightway the new  
 king revolted from Nabuchodonosor, and sent envoys to Egypt, asking  
 for horses, asking for the despatch of a great army in his support. Speeds  
 he, finds he deliverance? Should broken faith avail him? As I am a living  
 God, the Lord says, Babylon that made a king of him, Babylon that  
 exacted his false oath of allegiance, shall be the place of his death.  
 Nor think that his enemy<sup>3</sup> will need great strength, a great number of men,

<sup>1</sup> 'Merchant-head'; the Latin version here translates, 'Chanaan,' 'mount of trafficking.' Chelidon is evidently meant.

<sup>2</sup> vs. 22-24. The Latin here, like the Septuagint Greek, has the verb in the future tense. But the reference is clearly to the baseness of Josiah, which had already taken place, not to that of Zedekiah.

<sup>3</sup> In the original, 'Pharaoh.' But it seems clear that the man is in fact Nabuchodonosor, not Pharaoh, was the enemy. And although the Hebrew text has

to surround him, around here, trench there, and the loss of many lives; for the man that did so (A), held his faith a light thing and broke the bond as he had set his hand to, there is no escape. This doom the Lord pronounces: As I am a living God, false truth and broken treaty shall be the undoing of him! My net is spread; I have him in the toils; Babylon for a hind! There I will call him to account for the darkness he has done to my name by his treachery; and all that escape with him, say, his whole army, must fall by the sword, or survive scattered to the four winds; you shall learn what manner of God you worship.

And here is a message from the Lord God: With of the nail cedar I will take and set it firm, young branch from its crest of branches I will snap off, and plant it on a mountain that stands high above the rest. High in the hill-country of Israel I will plant it, and there it shall grow into a great cedar-tree; no bird on the wing but shall find rest under its shade, birds among its branches; all of the forest knows its name, that I, the Lord, as being high yet low, make low yet high, wither the blooming branch, give life to the barren. What the Lord promises, the Lord fulfils.

## CHAPTER 18

WORD came to me from the Lord: Strange, that a proverb should be current in Israel, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are being set on edge! As I am a living God, the Lord says, this proverb shall be current in Israel no more. What, is man every soul at my disposal, father and son alike? Is the guilty soul that must die, Is a man loyal to me, does he live innocently and uprightly? Is he any wise never trusted at mountain-shoals, or looked for help to the false gods that are worshipped in Israel; never comes between his neighbour's sheets as had commerce with a woman when she was defiled? Does he keep clear of oppression, giving back the pledge he took from his neighbour, and sitting nothing by violence? Does he find the hungry, clothe the naked? Does he shut away and resort? Does he refuse the bribe, and judge honestly between man and man? Does he following commandments, hold fast to my ordinances, as a true man should? Here is a loyal servant of mine; life for him, he shall live on, says the Lord God.

But now, what if you be begun that is a man of violence, a murderer; he lends himself to any of these practices which his father ever shunned? Is

he met as tempting the Pharaoh with his great army will not be able to save Seducing, this is not the same repeated off, the parallel is more & deeper.

<sup>1</sup> *see 10, 11.* The man of the Hebrew is somewhat doubtful, and the grammar of the Latin obscure, but "which his father ever shunned" is probably the sense originally intended. The rendering "though not all of them" is possible, but hardly attractive.

- 10 As hill-shrine man he, welded with wrongs he, the friendless poor  
opposes; gets him ill gains, withholds the pledge, breaks himself to  
11 a false god and foul ring; a sinner besides and an envious one. Shall he live  
out? Nay, no life for him; he must die the death his first crimes have  
12 earned him. Son of his, in turn, warned by such a father's doom, fir-  
13 mly owns that ill example. Not for him the hill fear, the false gods of the  
14 countryside, the adulterous bed, never a wrong done, a pledge withheld,  
15 gain dishonestly come by, finds he the hungry, clothes the naked, and  
keeps clear of oppression, and every, and intentions: what of him? Does  
16 of my will, keeper of my law, he shall not die for his father's sin; he  
17 shall live on. His father, a man of wrong and violence, that deserved ill  
18 of his countrymen, has paid for his guilt by death; would you have the  
son, too, make amends for it? Nay, but here is a man upright and honest,  
that holds that by decrees of mine and obeys them; he must live on.
- 19 It is the guilty soul that must die; not for the son the father's punish-  
ment, not for the father the son's good shall befall the good, evil the evil.
- 20 It may be the wicked man will repent of all his sinful deeds, and learn  
to keep my commandments, and live honestly and uprightly; if so, he shall  
21 live on; life, not death, for him. All his transgressions shall be forgotten,  
22 and his uprightness shall bring him life. What pleasure should I find in  
the death of a sinner, the Lord God says, when he might have turned  
23 back from his evil ways, and found life instead? It may be the innocent  
man will lose his innocence, and begin to live as foul a life as that other  
in his wickedness; if so, shall he be spared? No, all his upright life shall  
be forgotten; a snare, shall he not die in his treachery, a sinner in his sin?  
24 And yet you say, The Lord is inconsistent in his dealings! Listen, sons  
25 of Israel; it is your dealings that are inconsistent, not mine. The inno-  
cent man loses his innocence, and lives unjust; it is death I deal to him;  
26 he dies for his guilty deeds. The wicked man abandons his wicked ways,  
27 and learns to live honestly and uprightly; he wins life by it. He betrays  
himself, and turns away from his evil doings; there is life, not death, for  
him.
- 28 What, should the sons of Israel hold the Lord inconsistent? It is you  
29 who are inconsistent, sons of Israel, not he. Each by his own life you  
shall be judged, sons of Israel, the Lord God says. Come back, and make  
30 amends for all this guilt of yours, that shall die be your undoing: away  
with them, your defiant rebellions against me; a new heart, a new spirit!  
31 Why must you choose death, sons of Israel? Die who will, his death is  
none of my contriving, says the Lord God; come back to me, and live!



## CHAPTER 19

THINE to raise a dirge over the princes of Israel. Princes, that  
 mother of thine was a Sycamore indeed; where thine nurse, the  
 made her lair, among their whelps nursed her brood.<sup>1</sup> One with the  
 passed that gate to thine's arms, harked to bring down his prey, so one  
 came; the neighbour<sup>2</sup> heard of it, caught him, not wonderless, in their  
 pit, and carried him off in chains to Egypt. Dashed of her hopes, she  
 nursed another, till it was a grown son. This one, in turn, took his aim  
 like a lion among the reed learned to bring down prey, not mere, of women  
 make widows, of cities a desert; disappointed a whole land with his roasting.  
 As that, folk came from far and near<sup>3</sup> with nets to snare him, caught him  
 in their snail coils: and caged him. This one they led off in chains to the  
 king of Babylon; in Babylon he remained a prisoner, and his voice was  
 heard on the hill sides of Israel no more.

Mother of that royal stock! Vine planted by the water-side, and in that a  
 neighborhood truly and fruitful both, was never so fertile. Here was a  
 vine could yield sturdy boughs, suppose the kings to govern with high  
 grew the leaves, fair the branching tendrils. But recognition fell upon it, it  
 rose up and shrank away as the ground, the showers to wither its leaves;  
 faded and dry those strong boughs, till at last fire consumed them! It is  
 planted now far away, in the parched soil of a desert. Flue came out from  
 those branching boughs, that consumed all the fruit of it; never a sturdy  
 bough more, to be a king's support. Make dole, then; here is good cause  
 for dole.

## CHAPTER 20

AND now it was the seventh year, the tenth day of the fifth month.  
 Some of the Israelite leaders had come to visit me, asking what was  
 the Lord's will, and sit downed with me. And this message I had from  
 the Lord: Son of man, tell the leaders of Israel this from the Lord God:  
 Would you come to sit my wife? As I am a living God, the Lord says,  
 you shall have no answer. Arraign them, son of man, arraign them for a

<sup>1</sup> The two lions referred to are presumably Jonathan (IV Kg. 13:14) and  
 Jehonadab (IV Kg. 14:12). The nation referred to is probably the kingdom of Judah.  
 The absence of any notice at the beginning of the chapter is curious, and it does  
 not follow naturally on chapter 18. Some words may perhaps have fallen out, or  
 the whole chapter may have been suitably misplaced.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'his nation.'

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'allies taken from the periphery.' It is a habit of Hebrew writers  
 to read the application of a parable into the parable itself.

their voices) tell them what God things their fathers did before them.  
 1 This shall be thy message to them from the Lord God: Long ago I made  
 choice of Israel, plighted to Jacob my love, when I made myself known  
 2 to them in the land of Egypt. I swore to be their own God, swore that  
 I would take them away to the house I had decreed for them, a land all  
 3 milk and honey, the best of lands. Only, I told them, his darling idolatry  
 4 that each man must not make; not for you to be contaminated with the  
 5 false gods of Egypt; I, the Lord, am your God. All was defiance and dis-  
 obedience; idolatry still cherished, the worship of Egypt's gods still re-  
 6 forming. I was minded to let my anger have its way, let my vengeance  
 7 on them, there in Egypt. But no, I would be their champion, for my own  
 8 honour's sake; the brothers all around, that had witnessed my coming to  
 9 deliver them, must not learn to hold my honour cheap. So from Egypt  
 I rescued them, and led them out into the desert.

11 Then I gave them a law, made known to them the ways that bring  
 12 life, bade them share my Sabbath rest, that should be a token between  
 13 me and them, a token that they were doubly my own. What did Israel  
 14 then? Defied my anger, disobeyed my law, life-giving commandments  
 15 cast away, left my Sabbath all unobserved. Should I give rest to my  
 16 anger, and make an end of them, there in the desert? And let the brothers  
 17 see my work of deliverance half accomplished? For my honour's sake, I  
 18 must not. But I swore, out in the desert, that the promised land, all  
 19 milk and honey, best of lands, should never be theirs. My will defied,  
 20 my law forsaken, my Sabbath neglected, a ban set on idols, they should  
 21 learn so now, had not my pity spared them, they should have died there  
 22 and there, smothered up in those wastes. To their sons, the desert-born,  
 23 warning I gave: Not for you your fathers' example, your fathers' in-  
 24 24 durance, the contamination of the false gods they worshipped. I, the Lord,  
 25 am your God, mine the love you must follow, the anger you must  
 26 26 cherish and obey; my Sabbath you must honour, be token that the Lord  
 27 27 is the God you worship. But they too, the sons, defied me; my love  
 28 28 forsaken, my life-giving ways forgot, my Sabbath profaned. There in  
 29 29 the desert I would have given rest to my anger, let my vengeance take  
 30 30 its toll of them, but still I held my hand; for my own honour, the brothers  
 31 31 must see my work of deliverance accomplished. But once more in the  
 32 32 desert I bound myself by an oath . . . I would scatter them among all the  
 33 33 nations, spread them over the face of earth, men defiant of my will, in-  
 34 34 temptuous of my law, careless of my Sabbath as ever, when the false gods

<sup>1</sup> It seems possible that his heart is softened here, such as it ever likely to come in a passage full of repetition. Verses 24 seems to deal with an existing division laid with a future warning, the Exod. 4.27, 28.2 and if so, the threat of dispersal would more sensibly be turned against a people already united in Chanaan.

of their fathers banking still. Lave they should have, but for their in-lane, wages that brought, not life, but death; guilty, they should stain a character with fresh guilt by the very offerings they made, when they consecrated their first-born to the fire, they must have proof of my power at last.<sup>1</sup>

They blasphemed me (tell Israel from the Lord God), those fathers of yours, and did me great despite. Scarcely had I brought them into the as-promised land, when the sight of high mountains here, thick forests there, set them offering victims in honour of my rivals, burning incense, pouring libations! Well might I ask them, Whither resort ye? And hither whence they are called to this day.<sup>2</sup>

Give the men of Israel, then, this message from the Lord God: Still as the same ways your fathers went, still the same look for things abominable? To this day, when you would make offering, you pass your sons as through the fire; paths of slavery stain you yet, and shall I make answer to you, men of Israel? As I am a living God, the Lord says, you shall have no quarter from me! Never think I will allow you to worship wood and to serve the other races of men, your neighbours; as I am a living God, the Lord says, I mean to reign over you, though it should cost all the exercise of my constraining power, all the outpouring of my vengeance. Reviled from many nations, mistreated from many lands, you shall as yet serve me perfectly, my power constraining you, my vengeance threatening you. I will lead you out into a desert world, and there plead my cause as against you, as I did with your fathers long ago, in the desert countries as of Egypt. I will fence you under my sceptre, chain you to my armchair, as The rebels I will set apart, and through I summon them away from their as-banishment, they shall never return to the land of Israel; then you will know what manner of God you serve. Come, then, says the Lord God, as let each man have recourse to his own idol, and pay it due worship! If that counsel you will not follow, nor deny my cause in the day with final then and then gods . . .<sup>3</sup>

On that holy mountain of mine, the Lord God says, that high mountain as

<sup>1</sup> *ib.* 29, 30. This passage cannot mean that Astarte God commanded the sacrifice of children of, *ib.* 29-30. The passage implies, by a kind of ironic exaggeration, that by refusing aid to his guilty people God drove them to desperate worship of Baal, whose temple brought death instead of life. 'Lave they should have,' 'they should stain themselves.' Finally, 'I gave them laws,' 'I raised them.'

<sup>2</sup> This verse contains a (probably fanciful) derivation of the word Hebrew word for 'half-children.' It is perhaps intended to emphasize the fact that the children were still used in the people's own day, in spite of all the prohibitions Israel had experienced.

<sup>3</sup> It seems clear that there is an omission after this verse, unless indeed the use of it has been incorrectly transmitted.

- that looks down over Israel, all the race of Israel shall be my worshippers, favoured nations in a favoured land, fruit and title, all your offerings shall be received there. Reserved from so many masters, surrounded from so many lands, you shall be a fragrant offering of all my dealings with you the heathen that surround, and you yourselves shall recognise my power, restored to the land of Israel, the land I promised to your fathers.
- Fallen judges and foul misdoings you shall remember yet, and think with loathing of what you were; my power you shall know, men of Israel, says the Lord God; and that I was your benefactor, not for your deserts, that evil and sinners, but for my own honour's sake.
- Word came to me from the Lord: Look northward, son of man; pour out thy complaint towards the noon-day sun, and let the southern winds hear thee prophesy. To the listening forest give this message from the Lord God: I mean to cut thee down, leave thy green top and dry, unspeakable, that flame shall scorch the faces of all beholders, north wind and south side; plain enough it shall be for all the world to see that it was I, the Lord, set it afire, and there is no quenching it.
- Alas for pity, Lord God, said I, they are complaining already that I speak to them only in parables!

## CHAPTER 21

- SO the Lord's word came to me, Why then, son of man, towards Jerusalem turn thee, pour out thy complaint southward, and let the land of Israel hear thee prophesy. And this be thy message to the land of Israel: Here is that the Lord God says; here is my sword unsheathed to make an end of thy inhabitants, innocent souls and guilty.
- In vision that all hills must perish, northward and south side, all the world sees, my unsheathed sword never goes on its scabbard: drawn it is, plain for all the world to see, and there is no sheathing it. And therefore I would have thee green, as moss grows that have an abiding in the holes, very pitiously in the public view; ask they the reason of it, thou wilt say, For ill tidings. Fear every heart shall be, when those tidings come, every hand shall hang listless; cowed every spirit shall be, every knee flag. These tidings are on the way, the Lord God says; there is no smothering it.
- Word came to me from the Lord: Tell them, son of man, the Lord God has this message for thee to utter: Whetted the sword is, polished the sword is, whetted for slaughter, polished to dazzle as lightning darts. Never a tree but must fall at thy onset, woodmen who act in confidence as the serpent my son wields.<sup>1</sup> Polished, for the hand to grasp it well, the

<sup>1</sup>Like much else in this chapter, the second half of the verse is obscure, and probably corrupt, in the Hebrew text.

sharp sword, the bright sword, which the slayer must needs brandish. Cry aloud, son of man, and bewail thee, that as my people it must fall, as and all the princes of Israel that are left; prince and people, doomed as perish by the sword; slain as thy slayer must determine. A third sword, as the Lord God says, and when peace's surprise it has overthrown, brought to nothing. . . .<sup>1</sup> Prophecy, then, son of man; smite hands together and is call for a second stroke and a third of the swinging sword, a sword of menaces, that strikes men dumb, turns their hearts flint, and lays all in its ruin. Havaric strength at every gate by the sharp sword, the sword polished till it shines again, whipped about the hips for more ease of striking! Sweep to thy blade; cut right, cut left, wherever thy foot is broken down! I too will smite hands together, telling the tale of my vengeance; I, the Lord, increased thee.

Word came to me from the Lord: And now, son of man, draw a picture. A picture of two roads, both leading from a common point, by which the sword of the Chaldean king may travel. Here he is, planning his course at the sign-post, where two roads meet, a sign at the end of either. From the two roads, one leading to the road to Rabboth, where the *Ammonites dwell*, one to Jeda, and Jerusalem the impregnable. There is made the king of Babylon at the parting of the ways, taking counsel; there is shuffling of grooves, *mingling of desires, reaching of controls*. Closest to the right, it is the Jerusalem; the harrowing-curse, the breach its made ere the slaughter can begin, the cries of battle, the march to the gate, the march, the siege-works. Thy picture will show him as a man is baffled by the cross: gives him, that manlike idea, as if he were helping the sabbath rest.<sup>2</sup> Then he remembers the guilt; shall a guilty rest go free?

Ag, says the Lord God, will I live in the memory of that guilt; upon is which you are, and never a thought in your hearts but shows vile; capture, waste you, that revive those memories still. And then, perjured wretch is that robust Israel, thy slave has run away; off with head-band, off with a crown, symbols that honour the base, the noble degraded! I will wear it in this way, wear it that, as it was never wearied yet;<sup>3</sup> at last one shall come that claims it of right, and to him I will give it.

<sup>1</sup> Does once the Hebrew text give us no help, and grammar can only be witnessed to the Latin by assuming that there has been an omission in the original.

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text refers here not to keeping sabbath, but to wearing robes the price of it is extremely doubtful.

<sup>3</sup> "Symbola that honour the base, the noble degraded! I will wear it this way, wear it that, as it was never wearied yet." Literally, the Latin version runs: 'In me: this the thing that has clothed the low, adorned the high! I will make it gain, gain, gain (or perhaps, compounding, compounding, compounding). And this has not happened.' The Hebrew text appears to mean: 'This is not this! Let up the

20   Prophery, son of man, and give a message from the Lord God to the  
 21   men of Ammon, in answer to their request: Draw ye the sword, called  
 22   in thy<sup>1</sup> whetted by the sword and bright for its work of slaying! Nay,  
 sword of Ammon, it was but a vain dream, a lying enquiry, that it should  
 be thy office to fall on the necks of yonder doomed country, whose time  
 is far run out. Back to thy sheath with thee, back to thy native soil; there,  
 23   as in the land where thou wast fished, I will call thee to account. I  
 mean to pour out my vengeance on thee, blast thee with the fire of my  
 anger; heathen foes shall have the mastery of thee, that art skilful only  
 24   in deceiving. Fire shall feed on thee, earth run with thy blood, citizens  
 bury thy name; I, the Lord, have given sentence.

## CHAPTER 13

1   **W**ORD came to me from the Lord: With thee art smitten thou,  
 2   *city* of his mysterious place, with dove not smitten thou? Con-  
 front them with their foul misdeeds, and give them this message from  
 the Lord God: Haze is a city that haunts her own and with open blood-  
 3 shed, with herself with idish in her own undoing. Blood-spills and wicked-  
 4   fith have brought thy time scarce, shortened thy years; what marvel if I  
 5   let the heathen reproach thee, a whole world mock thee? What marvel  
 if men crouch over thee, far and near, gaze only in thy misfortune, as thou  
 6 art renowned only for thy shame? No better tale now in Hazek's holding,  
 7 than to fill those streets with blood! Home of wrong, where father and  
 8 mother are despised, the stranger oppressed, widow and orphan ill-used:  
 9 My sanctuary, how it is despised, my sabbath how profaned! Innocent  
 lives sweep away, flouting at the hill-shrines, and find death days besides;  
 10 we see where a father's bed is dishonoured, a woman pleads her defilement  
 11 in vain; neighbour comes inchantly between his neighbour's doors,  
 father looks inchantly with his son's wife, brother runs with sister  
 12   spring of the same blood! The murderer's hire, covet and extortion,  
 gains won by violence; and of me, the Lord God says, never a thought!  
 13   Well may I smite Hazek together, indignant at thy ill-gotten gains, thy  
 14   murderous doings: will thy courage be so high, thy arm so powerful,  
 when it is I that reckon with thee? What the Lord demands, the Lord

low, shall the High I will make it dishonour, dishonour, dishonour. And this  
 must hold."

<sup>1</sup> The words 'called thy' and 'sword of Ammon' in the next verse, are not  
 in the original; they have been inserted above as being necessary for the under-  
 standing of what the passage presumably means. It appears that the Ammonites  
 had hoped to profit by the misdeeds of Israel, instead of which they will be  
 involved in a common ruin.

fellish. For will I banish thee, widely scatter thee, and bring the rule of us thy shame to an end, so I will claim my rights over thee for all the world is to see, and thou shalt learn at last my power.

And word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, where the rule of us Israel shames in the heart of the furnace, nothing I find but dross; all is copper, and tin, and iron, and lead; dross of silver where silver should be. This meaning, then, the Lord God has for thee: I mean to stir you up as in Jerusalem, dross as you are; this shall be your furnace, silver and as copper and tin and iron and lead, all together and I will light a fire to smelt you. There my angry vengeance shall inspire you, and I will give you respite for a little, and then smelt you down. Rehearsed there, with is the fire of my anger to smelt you like silver in the furnace, you shall feel as the force of the Lord's vengeance at last.

Then word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, tell the head of us Israhel that it is useless, and, when my vengeance falls on it, ruin it shall have none. What of the prophets? A sworn conspiracy; lions roaring for us their prey, the lives of men; wealth and treasure they must have; there be wisdom everywhere. What of the priests? Priests, that despite us my law, violate my sanctuary, cannot tell sacred from profane, count all men, clean or unclean; priests, that leave my own altars unprotected, as I am defiled by their company? What of the nobles? us Reviving widows, all blood and murder, greedy for gain; and here are the us prophets with their untempered words, their vain dreams and false vapours, crying a message from the Lord when message from the Lord they have none. Great wrong the citizens themselves do, telling where us they will, harrying the helpless poor, oppressing the stranger and daring him redress. Who would close the breach, intercede with me to spare us the land from ruin? Never a man was found! What wonder if I have us poured out my vengeance, burnt them up in my anger? It was but their desert: I gave them, says the Lord God.

## CHAPTER 23

**W**ORD came to me from the Lord: There were two women once, us son of man, daughters of the same mother, that went to Egypt and us played the wanton there, so wanton and so young! There those breasts surrendered to the touch, virginity was withlaid. For their names, the us sister was called Othia, the younger Othia; both I espoused, and they bore me sons and daughters. (Samaris and Jerusalem are the true names).

What did Othia? She played me false, love-sick for the Assyrians that us

<sup>1</sup>For 'prophet' the Septuagint Greek has 'patriarch,' which may well be the true reading; only a difference of one letter is involved in the Hebrew, and the prophets are so commemorated in verse 4 below.

1 dwell hard by, her paramours. Gygallions were there, princes and nobles-  
 2 men that were clad in purple, and proudly they came riding, for they were  
 3 horsemen all. Among the flower of Assyrian chivalry was none but ensloped,  
 her favourites and she, that courted all sides, rolled herself with their melody.  
 4 Alas, still unconquered her dalliance in Egypt; the lovers that bedded her  
 in her youth, mishandled her virgin breast, plied her with their detrac-  
 5 tory! Lo!—tick the new paramours, into their keeping she should be  
 6 given up, the Assyrians should have the mastery of her. How they  
 stripped and dishonoured her, robbed her of nose and daughter both,  
 and then put her in the sword! Never shall such signal punishment upon  
 woman-kind.

7 That sight before her, what did the other state, Qôlba? Woe, she can-  
 8 not were the first in her wantonness, more lascivious yet; she too ran shame  
 aside, gave herself to the gallies of Assyria that came riding by, home-  
 9 men all, princes and noblemen in their brocaded cloaks, so young, so  
 10 fair! Light women both; I knew them now. This other would set no  
 bounds to her rage; her eye fell on some pined wall, where the men of  
 11 Chaldean mood portrayed, all in crimson. What girdles they had about  
 their loins, some men of Babylon, what gaily-coloured turbans they  
 wore! Sure, they must be princes, all of them, in their own Chaldean  
 12 land! And with that, her eye fell a-doting on them, and she went send-  
 13 ing them a message all the way to Chaldean. So the Chaldeans, too, went  
 her bed-fellows, dishonoured her with their embraces, till even she grew  
 14 weary of dishonour. Weary was I too, as soon of her sinners; the open  
 15 harlotry, the public shame! Must she still renew her unfaithfulness,  
 16 longer still after those old detracteries in Egypt, when she was love-  
 sick for gallies hazy as the wild sea, yet so stationary?

17 Alas, Qôlba, are they remembered still, the passions of thy youth,  
 far away in Egypt, when those bristls surrendered to the attack, the vir-  
 18 ginity was ravished? This down, then, the Lord God pronounces on  
 thee! They shall be summoned to the attack, all those old lovers thou art  
 19 marked of, belabour thee round about; all those Chaldeans from Baby-  
 lon, soldiers and prince and chiefs, all those gyg gallions from  
 Assyria, captains and rulers, heads paramount and heights of renown!  
 20 What rattling of chariot-wheels, what harking of warriars in breast-plate  
 and shield and helmet, mustered about thy walls! These shall be thy  
 21 judges, theirs the sentence thou must abide. Ministers of my jealous  
 anger, they shall cut nose and ears off thee, and there shall be sword-  
 22 strokes yet; carry off thy sons and thy daughters, and the fire shall have  
 23 work to do yet. They shall strip thee of thy clothes, rife thy proud orna-  
 ments, grieve the memory of thy harlotries in Egypt, no hankering for  
 them now, no thought of Egypt now!

24 'Weary thou art and distasteful of them, says the Lord God, but they



shall have the mastery of thee; and they shall see thee cruelly enough; a navy all thy harvest away, and leave thee stripped and boundless; lay bare the secret of thy shame. Last it is and lechery of thine that has brought us thee to this pass; so wondrously didst thou court the barmen, till at last their libation infected thee. Thy sister's counterpart, the cup of thy sister's doom thou shalt inherit; deep thy cup shall be as hers, wide as is hers; full of mockery and reproach, so much it holds, full of chastisement and a thorn, full of despair and melancholy, the cup of thy sister Samaria. Drink it thou shalt, ay, drain it to the dregs, till thou art ready to devour a cup itself pincered, or swallow thy own breasts in thy madness.<sup>1</sup> Me it thou shalt forget; so not thy back was rescued, swart and fishless, thou shalt be held to account.

Assigns them, one of man, the Lord God said to me, confront Oôla and Oôla with the record of their foul deeds. Blood-stained those adulterous hands; false gods they have taken for their partners, and to the grief of false gods sacrificed their own children and mine. Thine to a defile my sanctuary, profane my sabbath; no women had they then offering their sons to false gods, thus my sanctuary must be violated so would they treat me in my own house. And then they went wend to their partners, summoning them from afar.

They came, those partners; and those, fresh from the bath, eyes painted, all thy ornaments hang about thee, dote sweet thou, sitting on a fine bed with a table before in incense of mine, all of mine was there. What a riot was heard there, as of a great throng taking their ease! They as had brought in a rabble of desert folk with them, and those must be given bracelets for their arms, fine garlands for their heads. And I wondered whether she would grant them her favours, even she, that had grown so old in unfaithfulness; but sure enough they went in, boldly as to a harlot's bed.<sup>2</sup>

Such lovers had Oôla and Oôla, wretched both. Yet honest folk as there be,<sup>3</sup> that can judge their deeds as adultery should be judged and number; adulterous they are and murderous both at once. Master me as a company of such men, the Lord God says, and let them make a fearful example of these women, their pain. With stones from every hand, as with words from every side dispatch them; death for their children, the fire for their houses! Bid we the head of its guilt; of such heinous let all as

<sup>1</sup> The text and meaning of this verse is doubtful.

<sup>2</sup> *vs. 32-33.* It can hardly be doubted that the Hebrew text as we have it is corrupt or some can be made out of it. The translation given above follows the LXX, which is somewhat less obscure.

<sup>3</sup> This may refer (by a metaphor) to the Chaldeans, but more probably, in these concluding verses, the coming fate of Jerusalem is left out of sight, and appeal is made to the moral sense of the prophet's audience.

as women brew! Winecocks punished, Molay's guilt uncondoned; you shall know the Lord's power at last.

## CHAPTER 24

AND in the ninth year came, and the tenth month, and the tenth day  
 1 I saw it. And the Lord gave me this message: Son of man, write down  
 this day as The Day of Wrath.<sup>1</sup> This day, this very day, the king of Babylon  
 2 has closed his grip on Jerusalem. A riddle, a puzzle, for the rebellious  
 heath! Tell them the Lord God this blinding gave them: See a pot on the  
 3 fire, but filling it first with water; slice after slice goes in, all that is beef,  
 4 thigh and shoulder, the best pieces of all, to fill the pot; and the fire the  
 slings that yields down. Fire high the dust<sup>2</sup> beneath; now boil, pot, and  
 5 see the steam, there is the heart of it! But ah, says the Lord God, what of  
 the city that is stained with blood? It is no better than a pot covered with  
 rust, that cannot be scraped off any longer; broken in pieces that never be  
 6 cast away one by one; never shall the fire fill upon it.<sup>3</sup> Blood plain for all  
 7 to see, spilt on the polished rock, out as earth that might hide it away  
 8 under the dust; rock, not earth, so I would have it, blood uncondoned,  
 9 to warm my angry throne, my avenging pantheons!  
 10 Out upon the blood-stained city, says the Lord God, the great pyre  
 as I mean to kindle! Fire high the fuel for its burning! Why, how is this,  
 11 meat wasted, the whole dish charred, the very bones calcined? Empty of  
 12 water it must be set on the coals, till it is red-hot, and copper scales away,  
 13 and the scale on it is burnt out, and it is rusty no more! Ah, it is but  
 labour spent in vain; so deep is that rust, even the fire will not drive it  
 14 out.<sup>4</sup> A curse lies on this uselessness of things: purge them I would, yet

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'write down the name of this day, this very day.'

<sup>2</sup> The word translated 'dust,' here and in verse 10, is in the Latin 'bones.'

The Hebrew text has 'bones' here and 'wood' in verse 10; the two Hebrew words differ only by a single letter. There is some likelihood that the original had 'wood' in both places.

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew text is obscure, and perhaps corrupt; as it stands, it more means that the rusty pot was thrown away in place, not that it was scraped of the slices of meat. It is difficult to see why a 'pot' should fill upon it, unless indeed we are to think of it as so clogged with scales that it could not stand to hold as an urn for making loss in.

<sup>4</sup> vs. 10-13. No certainty can be attained about the meaning of this passage. The Latin, but not the Hebrew text, has the word 'emptier' in verse 10; if it is rendered above 'empty of water,' on the assumption that we are meant to look back to verse 9. A cooking-vessel with no water in it—possibly because it has rusted away iron-bones—will char the meat that is put into it and afterwards be burnt through, so that it is left more useless than ever. But it is not clear that this is the meaning.

purged them will never be, never till I have taken full toll of my vengeance on them. Such is my desire: come it must, executed it needs it must be; indignance is mine, not mercy, not pity; I will pay them what they ill life, thy ill thoughts have earned.

The Lord's word came to me, Son of man, I mean to smite thee down, as by taking away from thee what thou most lovest. Dole make thee none, nor lament, shed never a tear. Unminded be thy sighing, with no funeral a grief make; thy head covered, thy feet shod, as well on thy face, no customary face of mourning. And as it was; that morning I uttered my word as to the people, and my wife died as set of sun. Next day, I did as the Lord bade me, and the people were all agog to know the meaning of what I did. Why, I told them, the Lord has spoken to me, giving me a message as for the sin of Israel: he means to profane his own sanctuary, that proud house of yours, which you love so, trembling ever for its safety. Sons and daughters of yours, left behind at Jerusalem, will die at the sword's point. As I do now, you will do thence no veil on your faces, no customary frown of mourning, heads covered, feet shod, you will make nothing dole nor as lament, but laughish even under the load of your guilt, sighing each of you in his neighbour's ear.<sup>1</sup> In Ezekiel, says the Lord God, read your own doom; when that day comes, you will be as pains to do as he doeth now, your losses least at last.

Yes, son of man, the day is coming when I will rub them of that is chiefest of theirs, that proud house of theirs, so well loved, the comfort of their thought; rob them, too, of sons and daughters. And what of thyself? What till a fugitive comes and tells thee the news?<sup>2</sup> Then, when he utters his message, smite thou thine, dumb no longer. So thou shalt be the prange of their doom, and they shall learn my power at last.

## CHAPTER 25

WORD came to me from the Lord: Son of man, turn thy regard: I command the Ammonites, and prophesy their doom. Give Ammon this message from the Lord God: Joy, joy! was thy cry when my sanctuary was profaned, Israel ravaged, the men of Jude carried off into exile; what shall be thy reward? The eastern folk shall enjoy thy lands; sheep-cote of theirs, tent of theirs shall be found in thee, crop of thine they shall eat, milk of thine drink; camels lodged in Balbath, and all Ammon a pasture-land of sheep! Thus you shall know what power is

<sup>1</sup> See. 24. 15. Various reasons have been suggested for this absence of public lament among the exiled community; that of political consequences is perhaps the simplest explanation.

<sup>2</sup> It seems to be implied that Ezekiel received no more revelations for his own fellow-exiles during the two years of the siege. Cf. 24.26.

- mine. For clapping of hand and stamping of foot, and heart that rejoined at itself's fall, that power shall be used in vengeance; all the world shall have the pillaging of thee, till thou art a nation no longer, a kingdom no longer; thy rule shall reach thee what measure of God I am.
- This doom, too, the Lord God pronounces: Bowed they, the Moabites and the men of Seir, that Jews had gone the way of other lands? I will lay upon the valleys of Moab, that climb up from the cities, those frontier cities, like Bethjeshaim, and Basmany and Gathshaim, upon them to the men of the east in their pursuit of the Ammonites, and all shall be overcome. Ammon shall be blotted out from the memory of mankind,<sup>1</sup> and there is justice, too, awaiting the Moabites: they too shall learn my power.
- And this I did the Edomites to glut their ravine, by taking their revenge on Jude. This doom the Lord God pronounces: My hand is raised to smite Edom, sparing neither man nor beast, making a desert of it all the way from Teman in the south to Dedan, that shall be put to the sword. My own people of Israel shall execute this vengeance against Edom, avenge for me the grudge I bear it; then it shall be seen how I punish my enemies, the Lord God says.
- And this Ruin of the Philistines, that numerous tell would take, a old scores would tell! Against the Philistines, too, this hand is raised; scattered they shall be, the scatteredness! the dwellers on the sea-coast, all that is left of them, I mean to exterminate. Great havoc I mean to make of them, according to my anger; such havoc as shall reach them to know what the Lord is.

## CHAPTER 36

- IN King Sennacherib's seventh year, on the first day of the . . . month, I heard came to me from the Lord: Son of man, what was the cry of Tyre over Jerusalem? Joy, joy, the toll-gate<sup>2</sup> of the world has been broken down: it is mine now; I shall give it on Jerusalem's ruin. This doom the Lord God pronounces: Have at thee, Tyre! I mean to bring borders of

<sup>1</sup> vs. 4, 10. Literally: 'Scold', I will open up the shoulder of Moab from the cities from his sides, I see, and from his frontiers (I will open up) those famous (cities) of the north, Bethjeshaim, Basmany and Gathshaim, to the end of the east with the sons of Ammon; etc. It seems probable that the whole prophecy against Moab has come down to us in a faulty text; the mention of Seir (Edom) in verse 8 seems too early, the mention of Ammon in verse 10 too late.

<sup>2</sup> 'The scatteredness', that is, the Carianians, a Philistine clan, 'scatteredness' took by the destruction of their name, and by the office they enjoyed under the early kings of Israel (II Kg. 18.8, III Kg. 1.29, 30).

<sup>3</sup> In the original simply 'the gate' but it is difficult to see how Tyre could have regarded Judaea as her rival, except in the sense that it lay on the trade route between the Gulf of Akabah (III Kg. 9.26, 27.29) and the Phœnician ports.

naïons marching on thee, like waves upon waves of the sea. Walls of Tyre, they shall break down, and towers of her overthrow; all the wall I will scrape away from her, and leave her bare rock. Down let it be but as a island where fishes-folk dry their nets; I, the Lord God, will give her over as a prey to all the nations. Daughters-nations that stand in her vicinity shall be put to the sword, and learn my power at her.

Here is Nabuchodonosor of Babylon, the Lord says, a king that has kings by his vassals, marching from the north with horse and chariot, with his knights and all his rulers, a great army of men, to put thy daughter-sons to the sword, compass thee with deep walls and raise a mound about thee. A barrier of shields he will raise under thy walls, ply a cogion and battering-ram against them, and bring down thy towers with grappling-irons. Of houses such a company, as shall cover thee all with a dust; with cries of horsemen and rattle of chariot-wheels entering thy gates, thy walls shall drop again like the walls of a breached city. Never a street of thine but must echo with hoofs; hounded thy citizens shall be, thy fair pillars cast down, thy wealth plundered, thy merchandise taken as the spoil. Down shall come walls, palace towers in ruins; stones and timber and mortar of thine shall strewn the sea. Hushed the murmur of thy songs; never more the sound of harp shall be heard in thee. Bare rock is thou shalt be, for fishes-folk to dry their nets on; there shall be no building there again, says the Lord God.

This too: The very Isles shall echo with the crash of thy fall, ring with the cries of the wounded dying in thy streets. Down from their dwellings as they shall come, all the lords of the sea-harbours, throw robes aside, broidered coats lay down; wrapp'd in dismay they sit on the bare ground, at the sudden fall of thee breasted and amazed. And then they shall ring thy days: What a doom was thine, sea-built city, far renowned! Mistress of the sea, mother of a race that all held in dread! Day of onset, as thou affrightest the very ships, fill the islands with alarm, to see no ships leave thy harbour now!

This too: Desolate thou shalt be, thy place among the low cities; higher as and higher yet the fishermen's nets shall rise about thee, encircling thee up under its waves. Among the dead thy place is, thou go down like the graves, where time is set; remembered with those other raised cities in the depths of earth, treated no longer. The living world shall see the glory of my presence, but thou shalt have no part in it, thou shalt no longer be; who marches for thee will march evermore in vain, says the Lord a God.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *ib.* 17-21. Actually the siege of Tyre lasted for thirteen years (cf. 26:28), and her commercial prosperity remained considerable for many centuries. Thus it seems clear that the picture of overthrown, however well observed as Ezekiel's vision, was not literally carried out in the course of divine Providence, and speaks figuratively.

## CHAPTER 27

- 1 **AND** word came to me from the Lord: 'Son of man, do thou thyself  
2 bring the dings over Tyre. A message from the Lord God to the city  
that is built by the sea's gates, and traffics with many peoples on many  
3 shores! There was the boast of perfect beauty, the encompassing sea thy  
4 frontier. A well-fitted ship thou wast, such as they build on yonder coast;  
5 of fir-wood from Suez thy oars planks, of Lebanon cedar thy mast,  
6 oars shaped from Hama oak, thy thwarts of box-wood? From the western  
7 islands, with merchandise of Indian ivory. Of brackened linen from Egypt  
8 the sails they spread for thee, sewing of blue and purple from the Gerdan  
9 lakes gave thee shade.  
10 For thee, men of Sidon and of Arad manned the oar; thyself, Tyre,  
11 a great man of skill, thy own citizens, to be helmsmen. For thy deck-  
12 yards,<sup>1</sup> all the pre-learned wisdom of Orbal was at thy command, and for  
13 trafficking, never was ship so valiant in the world but visited thee. War-  
14 riors from Pedia, from Lydia, from Africa, sought thy battles, with  
15 shield and helmet dashed thy walls; men of Arad played the battle-  
16 ments, thy defenders, and the Cappadocians,<sup>2</sup> too, were manned on thy  
17 towers, on thy walls hung their quivers; looted nothing for thy ad-  
18 vantage.  
19 And for the merchants that dealt with thee, how Carthage poured her  
20 wealth into thy market-place, of silver and iron, of tin and lead! What  
21 purveyors of thine were Ionia, Tharsh, and Mosoch, with their slaves to  
22 sell thee, their wares of incense and the tars of Thogorma, with horns  
23 of hyacinth and opals! The sons of Dedan were thy pedlars; riches came  
24 to thee from the islands far away; ivory and ebony thou coudest win by  
25 a barter. Syria, too, for the multitude of thy wares, must trade with thee,  
26 exporting in thy mart carbasites, and purple, and castoreum, and linen,  
27 and silk, and rubies. Judah and Israel themselves had their yield to bring  
28 thee, frankincense and balsam and honey and oil and gum for thy walls.  
29 Damascus, for thy many goods, had much to exchange, raw wool and

<sup>1</sup> It seems almost certain that this word stood in the original, too, being rare, was widely misinterpreted. Thus our present Hebrew text speaks of 'the daughter of Asaph,' the Septuagint Greek of 'house-daughter habitation,' and the Latin version of 'small country-house.' For 'western' the Latin version has 'Italian,' but this is only a guess; *Italensis* (heavenward) is perhaps more so.

<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew text 'to smite thy heels'; in the Latin version 'for the assistance of thy armed equipment.'

<sup>3</sup> Who the Cappadocians were, is unknown; some think they were the Cappadocians. The Latin version can hardly be right in identifying them with the previous.

brightly dyed work. Dan and India and Moab offered wrought iron for exchange, with woods and cedars supplied them. Dedan brought thee saddles; as Arabia and Cedar's chiefness were at thy call, driving to land and demand a gain for thy purchasing. The merchants of Saba and Resena were thy new or chosen ones, with spices and precious stones and gold to show in thy fairs; Haran, Chess and Edom, Saba, Assur and Carmel, none of them but a exchanged traffic with thee; and how rich the variety of it, the comeliness of blue, the umbelliferous, the creamer-carbon wound about with cords, the cedar-wood, all for thy profit?

But the ships, they were thy pedlars in distant, the ocean-going ships, as that gave thee thy wealth, gave thee thy sea-enriched treasure. Alas, that as these caravans of thine should have ferried thee out into deep waters, for the storm-wind to catch thee, out in the heart of the sea! All thy wealth and treasure and merchandise, thy mariners and helmsmen, dockyard masters and captains, all the warriors thou hast, and the common folk that dwell in thee, must sink down to the sea's depths in this day of thy fall. Remembered, all thy navy, with the helmsmen's shouts; down come as the swimmers from their ships, making and piloting like the shore. Loud they are weeping, hear their cry, as they throw dust on their heads and upbraid themselves with woe; heads are shaven, wretched is every man's wear; as world's beauty are all spoiled, and world's lament. And a sad thing they as shall sleep as they mourn over thee: Thy was none like Tyre, that now the legations in the depths of the sea! Peoples a many thy trafficking rap-as plied; all the kings of the earth were richer for wealth of thine, enterprise of thine; and now the sea has swallowed thee up; buried in the deep a woe all the prosperity that was thine, all the citizens that thronged thee. The island peoples, how they stood agape at thy fall; the island is kings, how their faces fell at the news of thy shipwreck! How thy island is in derision, the traders of other nations! Only ruin is left of thee, for ever ruined and gone.

## CHAPTER 28

AND word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, give this message: I Am from the Lord God to the prince of Tyre: As ill day for thee, when thy proud heart said that thou wast a god, a self-reliant god-faithful in the

<sup>1</sup> vs. 12-14. There is considerable uncertainty, all through this section, about the identification of the nation mentioned and their wares. In verse 15 *Arava* (given) is probably a mistake for *Edom*, which resembles it in Hebrew script; the Edomite caravans would naturally bring various goods from the Red Sea. *Saba*, under the name of *Dan* (v. 12), has a separate mention below. The rest at the beginning of verse 15 is almost certainly corrupt.

heart of the real Mortal man, thou hast played the god in thy own thoughts. What if a Daniel thou wert for wisdom, no secret hiddest thou thereof! Skill and craft have brought thee power, lead thy coffers with gold and silver; and this skill of thine, this godlike's empire of thine, have made thee proud of thy own strength. This doest, thou, the Lord God: thou for thee, man, that wouldst play the god. I mean to rebuff thee with foreign foes, a swarthy nation as thou art, that shall draw eyes on that fair creature, thy wisdom, sell thy beauty in the flesh. Dragged down to thy ruin, wounded to thy death, thou in the heart of the sea, with thee will come of thy godhood to the deeps, while his reward expects thee! A South my down is for thee, death at an alien's hand, the unshattered for thy company.

11 This too: Son of man, sing a dirge over yonder king of Tyre.<sup>1</sup> This be thy message to him from the Lord God: The nation, thou, of my considerations.<sup>2</sup> How wise thou wast, how godlike this, with all God's garden to take thy pleasure in! His precious stone hat was in thy adorning; sardius, topaz, jasper, chrysolite, carb, beryl, nephrite, carnelian and emerald all of gold was thy fair bejewelling. And thy altar<sup>3</sup> was prepared for thee when thou wast created; a cherub thou shouldst be, thy wings outstretched in protecting thee: as God's holy mountain I placed it then, to come and go between the wheels of fire.<sup>4</sup> From the day of thy creation all was perfect in thee, till thou didst prove false: false within all these well-kings had made thee, and for thy guilt I must expel thee, guarding cherubs as thou wert, from God's mountain between the wheels of fire thou shouldst walk no longer. A heart made proud by its own

<sup>1</sup> v. 11. The 'king' of Tyre, to whom the dirge/song too seems was addressed, was doubtless a historical figure, but it is not certain that we ought to read even giving in the same connection the exaggerated phrases would suggest a historical antecedent to the Tyrian god Melkart ('King of the City'). Further, it seems evident that the poet here identifies him (even king or head god) with Satan, or some other fallen angel, of the reference to Lucifer in l. 12, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'the seed of mankind.' The Latin, like the other versions, gives a literal rendering of a continuously obscure phrase in the Hebrew. The word translated 'mankind' occurs only here. It is the verbal root of a verb meaning to regulate, to direct, to put in a right proportion. There are numerous occurrences of the verb in Scripture, and use of God are to shape it thus or to shape it so. It seems here, then, to suggest that we have here a *creatio ex nihilo*. The equilibrium or consideration of Almighty God in punishing the lost man who has turned down is illustrated by his treatment of the fallen Angel, who is therefore described as a seed or sower of this consideration.

<sup>3</sup> Literally 'altar' (or less possibly 'throne'). If the text is right, a niche seems for a god's image is perhaps the nearest intelligible meaning.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'wheels of fire.' But no plausible suggestion has been made as to what 'wheels of fire' could mean, and a very slight alteration in the Hebrew text would give the sense of 'wheels,' readily understandable in view of numerous passages (e.g. Job above).



beauty, wisdom raised through its own dazzling brightness, down to earth I must cast thee, an example for kings to see. Great guilt of thine, in all the sin of thy trafficking, have profaned thy sanctuary; such a sin I will punish in the heart of thee so shall be thy undoing, hence thee a heap of dust on the ground for all to gaze on. None on earth that recognises a sign that shall be destroyed at the sight of thee; only ruin left of thee, the scar rentured and gone.

This too: Son of man, turn thy regard towards Sileon, and prophesy in his doom. This message give it from the Lord God: Haze it then, Sileon in Betherfield thy territory shall be of my conquest; Is he, too, my power shall be made known, my sentence executed, my holiness vindicated. Flung I mean to bring down on her and blood-lusting back, the sword is everywhere, and wounded men dying in her streets, to prove what power the Lord has.

No more shall the lawless have scornful mockery round about, thence in and bring to grief and hurt thence they shall know at last what manner of God they serve. When I restore the scattered ones of Israel from his exile, the Lord God says, my holiness shall be vindicated for all the world to see. The land I gave to my servant Jacob shall be transformed in home; securely it shall dwell there, build houses, plant vineyards, that is no attack. It shall see every useful neighbour punished, and know at last what it is to have the Lord for its God.

## CHAPTER 29

IT was the tenth year of Sedechia, on the eleventh day of his tenth month, when word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, turn thy regard towards Pharo, king of Egypt, and prophesy his end and all Egypt's doom. This message give him from the Lord God: Haze it then, Pharo, king of Egypt, great danger that thou coastest between thy virtues, boasting that pander river is thy own, thou art a god, self-crowned! Thou art me, I will punish those joys of thine, and all the fish in thy river I will turn to thy scold! Out of the river, fish clinging to scales, I will drag thee, and leave thee agonised in the desert, and thy fish too. None shall go out to search for thy corpse, or bring it home; caution is shall be for him on earth, thy kind is heaven. and all the citizens of Egypt shall learn my power. This, because thou didst prove a staff of cane to the men of Israel;<sup>1</sup> grasped they that staff, it splintered, and there was an arm; wounded leared they on it, it broke, and their strength gave way under them.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'thou didst make thyself'; but some think the sense is 'thou didst make it (the cane) for thyself'; cf. verse 9.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. ix. 34b.

- 4 This do now, then, for the Lord God proclaims: For thee, the sword, man  
5 nor beast will I spare in thee; a bloody desert thou shalt be, till thou hast  
6 learned what my power is, thou that wastest be beasts' food and slaves'  
7 makers. Out upon thee, out upon those streams of thine; a desert Egypt  
8 shall be, deserted by the sword, from Syene's tower to the marches of  
9 Ethiopia: man nor beast shall set foot in it till it has lain forty years  
10 desolate. Land of Egypt shall be as the desert lands are, cities of Egypt  
11 as the ruined cities are, for forty years uninhabited; and the men of  
12 Egypt shall be scattered wide as earth among the nations.  
13 This too: At the end of forty years I will bring the Egyptians back  
14 from their quarters of exile, restore them from banishment, and in  
15 Pharaoh, the land of their birth, give them a home once more; there they  
16 shall be a kingdom of little account. Least of the kingdoms Egypt shall  
17 be, no more shall it lift up its head among the nations, no more for respite now.  
18 No more shall it raise hopes among the men of Israel, and bring upon  
19 them the guilt of looking a refuge there; they shall learn that I, the Lord,  
20 am their God.  
21 It was on the first day of the twenty-seventh year<sup>1</sup> that word came to  
22 me from the Lord: Son of man, here is great dweltgery king Nabuchodon-  
23 nesor of Babylon has given his men in the waste upon Tyre, every hand  
24 worn bald, every shoulder smooth, by the burden they carried! A  
25 thankless service! it was they did me there, he and his army; but now,  
26 says the Lord God, I will make use of Egypt to pay Nabuchodonesor his  
27 wages; all his great wealth he shall have, spoil for his spoiling, plunder for  
28 his plundering, and so his men shall have their reward. He has fought  
29 my battles, and Egypt shall be his recompense, the Lord God says. When  
30 that day comes, new life shall spring from the wreck of Israel, and to the  
31 men of Israel there shall speak with unshakened assurance, to show my  
32 divine power.

## CHAPTER 30

- 1 **A**ND again word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, tell them  
2 their doom in the name of the Lord God, and bid them raise lead  
3 banners: Alas, alas the day! Misery, misery is coming, the Lord's reckoning  
4 day, drawing its cloud; it is the heathen's turn now. Egypt shall feel the  
5 sword, and the Ethiopia unable to see Egypt's warriors dying, Egypt's  
6 wealth carried away, the foundations of Egypt overturned. Ethiopia  
7 and Lybia, all that monkey host, sons of Chub and men that hold

<sup>1</sup> The verse here gives us three chapters earlier refer to the siege of Tyre, though this is not expressed in the original. Less certainly can be told about the 'twenty-seventh year' of exile on p. 1.

their lands under treaty, by that same sword shall perish. Such down the  
 Lord God promoueth gone, all the props that supported her, gone her  
 great empire; all that lies beyond Syene, the Lord says, ravaged by the  
 sword! Land of Egypt shall be as the desert lands are, cities of Egypt as  
 the ruined cities are; my power they will never learn till I have spread  
 her over their country, till all their allies have perished. When that  
 day comes, there will be ships carrying news of my onset, to doom the  
 courage of Ethiopia; Egypt's doom approaching, they shall know it and be  
 afraid.

This too I mean to make an end of Egypt's prosperity, through King  
 Nabuchodonosor of Babylon; he and his army, in all the world is none  
 better, shall be let loose for the land's undoing, their swords driven so  
 till Egypt with death. I will dry up the course of its rivers, and leave the  
 land at the mercy of its bitter enemies; nothing in it but shall be ravaged  
 by alien hands; I, the Lord, have decreed it. Down shall come the gods  
 of Memphis, the Lord God says, I will have no more false gods there,  
 and prince in all the land shall be none. Such woes Egypt shall know,  
 Pharaoh all in ruin, Tophet afar, in Alexandria my doom executed.  
 Pelusium, her fortress, shall feel my vengeance, Alexandria be laid  
 waste; all Egypt shall be aflame, such bitter thores Pelusium shall have,  
 Alexandria such devastation, Memphis such hard waste day by day.  
 Their warriors put to the sword, Heliopolis shall be ravaged and  
 Bubastis; dark days there shall be at Tophet, when I crush the power of  
 Egypt there, and all the pride of her empire is gone; a city in darkness,  
 with all her women-folk carried off into exile. Such down I will execute  
 upon the Egyptians, and they shall know my power at last.

In the eleventh year of Sedecias, on the seventh day of the first month, so  
 word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, I have left Pharo, king of  
 Egypt, with his arm broken; bound up and bound it may not be, cloth or  
 bandage is none to bind about it and give it support, give it strength to  
 hold sword again. Out upon Pharo, king of Egypt, says the Lord God; at  
 that strong arm of his, that broken arm of his, I will divide, strike the  
 sword from his hand; dispersed among the nations Egypt shall be,  
 scattered to the winds. Strong arms I will give the king of Babylon, and  
 a sword to wield, so Pharo broken arms, and the groans of dying men  
 for all his comfort. Nabuchodonosor strong, and Pharo disabled; my  
 power shall be known, when my sword, in Babylon's hand, hangs over  
 Egypt: my power shall be known, when the seas of Egypt are scattered as  
 wide as earth among the nations.

## CHAPTER 31

**T**HEN, on the first day of the third month, word came to me from the  
 Lord: Son of man, here is a message for Pharaoh, King of Egypt, and  
 his nation. Say to him, This greatness of thine, whose memory does it  
 recall? Not less powerful once was the Assyrian<sup>1</sup> king, a very cedar of  
 Lebanon. How fair its boughs, yonder tree, its leaves have overshadow-  
 ing what height, what thickness of growth above its top! Water near-  
 took it, water came up from the depth beneath to nurture it, water  
 about its roots and parted into rills to feed the trees around. In all  
 the countryside none rose so tall, had covert so thick, branches so wide;  
 none led so deep. Among its boughs the birds nested, the beasts in their  
 midst sought its shade; proud nations a mass under Assyria's shelter  
 grew. So fair it was, so tall and spreading, there by the bystanding water's  
 side. In God's own garden cedar could not overtop it, its own match in  
 height, or plane-tree for shade. God's garden itself could not show  
 such beauty: never a tree there, tree of Eden,<sup>2</sup> but must envy its leafy  
 loveliness that was my gift.

Also, that he should aim too high, the Lord God says, also for youth's  
 luxurious pride, that swelled his heart with pride: I came needs head  
 him over to a conquering power, that should settle my redeeming with  
 a king he, the goddess, homeless should be. Cut down, yonder tree, by  
 silent woodmen, and left to lie on the hill-side, boughs clanking the  
 valleys, branches carried off by the mountain streams; massed masses  
 overshadow his shelter, and he was all alone. In the fallen trunk birds  
 nested, under torn branches the wild beasts made their lair: never again  
 should tree boast of its height, there by the river bank, overtopping the  
 covert of the woods, never again should the waters nourish its pride.  
 Death and the deep-earth should await them all, mortal things to a mortal  
 doom appointed.

Sad days was his, the Lord God says, as his down-going: the great  
 depth was the shroud of him, for flooding streams backed and stayed,  
 mourned Lebanon, and all the forest weened away. Now is asked  
 through the world, the crash of his fall! He too, like all mortal things, was  
 for the earth as last; comfort for those nations that were brought to earth

<sup>1</sup> Some think that the name of Assyria has slipped in through an error in the  
 text, and that Egypt itself, not Assyria, is being compared to the cedar-tree.  
 In verse 4, there is an instance of Assyria in the original; it has been introduced  
 for the sake of obviousness, on the assumption that the text of verse 2 has been  
 seriously misread.

<sup>2</sup> Eden, and in verse 21 and 24, the name "Eden" has been translated ("paradise")  
 in the Lucie version.

like himself, more of Eden like himself, so noble, so fair, so well watered  
 All shall come go down to the grave, the sword's way, his arm . . .<sup>1</sup> 17  
 . . . his shadow their protection against surrounding nations. And thou, 18  
 in thy greatness and glory among Eden's trees so like him! Yet thou, like  
 other Eden men, must come down low as earth one being there and the  
 sword shall find thee with the unconquered in death. (Pharo is great,  
 and Pharo's refuge.)<sup>2</sup>

# CHAPTER 32

AND in the twelfth year, on the first day of the twelfth month, word  
 came to me from the Lord: Son of man, sing a dirge for Pharo, the 1  
 king of Egypt, that counts for a lion among the nations: Mustange they  
 are of the depths, holding up thy head in those rivers of thine, feeding the  
 waters of every trampled stream! This doom the Lord God pronounces: 2  
 A war-work I have of many peoples that I will cast over thee, a strife that  
 will bring thee presently ashore. High on the beach I will leave thee 3  
 exposed, for all the birds to perch on thee, all the beasts to take their fill  
 of thee, fesh of thine shall cover the mountains, with blood of thine the 4  
 gullies shall overflow, peeling blood that drenches hill and choice valley 5  
 with its stream.

Thy light when I quench, muffled the stars shall be, the stars dim, the 6  
 sun bedimmed, and the moon shall refuse her light; no luminary in 7  
 heaven but shall go mourning for thee, and in that land of thine, the Lord  
 God says, all shall be darkness.

Here shall be a challenge to many nations, in lands thou still knowest 8  
 not, when I tell them the story of thy downfall: peoples there shall be 9  
 that gaze in bewilderment, kings that tremble and quake at the story of  
 thee. My reward they shall see flaring before their eyes, and each for his  
 own life shall tremble in the day of thy fall. Sword of the king of Babylon 10  
 shall reach thee, the Lord God says: tried warriors thy strongest multi- 11  
 tudes shall cut down, prison borders that shall harry the pride of Egypt,  
 smite her wealth. The very boats that row beside your fall streams 12  
 I will always never free of men, brood of beast shall rally to them-  
 forward; clear those waters shall be as never they were, smooth as oil 13  
 on the char's flow, the Lord God says: all Egypt, now, shall be desolate, 14  
 all its busy life shall be still, when I smite the man that dwell in it, and

<sup>1</sup> There seems to have been either an error, or an omission, in the Hebrew text. The Latin rendering, 'the arm of each will be under its shade' pleads no good sense.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Septuagint (Greek), the concluding words of the chapter should read 'In (it will be with) Pharo and all his refuge.'

- 14 think them to recognize my power. Make dole, then; here is good coming;  
 Egypt shall have the world for her mourning, none but shall mourn for  
 Egypt and her lost greatness, says the Lord God.  
 15 And on the fifteenth day of the month, this: Son of man, a plague now  
 for the common folk of Egypt; thy Egypt to her grave, and with her  
 16 those other proud as lions that must go down into the dark. Measure not  
 thy beauty against another's; to thy grave get thee, and with the water-  
 17 munched take thy rest. The sword carries off all alike; once loose it, she  
 18 and all her multitudes must perish. From the womb they grow the new-  
 born, those great warriors, men of the unconquered race, slain once,  
 19 that new lie there, slain in battle.<sup>1</sup> Here is the Assyrian king with all his  
 20 number; with how their graves ring him about, dead warriors all! Down  
 there in the dark, his grave and theirs around him, dead now in battle,  
 21 that once deigned the honors of the living! Here are the Elamites, too,  
 lying about their king, men unconquered that made themselves feared  
 in life, and now lie in the pit beneath with all those others, stripped and  
 22 shamed as they were left on the battle-field; there he lies, with his men  
 about him for mourning, once so feared; stripped and shamed they lie,  
 Elamites unconquered, there in the dark, there amongst the slain!<sup>2</sup>  
 23 Unconquered, too, the king of Moab and Thadai, with all his retinue  
 or buried around him, dead now and feared no longer; shall they not sleep  
 on shore with the slain warriors, with the unconquered, still armed,  
 swords beneath their heads; their corpses laid to rest yet, and feared no  
 24 longer?<sup>3</sup> The place too, the place of thy slain warriors, is with the uncon-  
 quered in their ruin. King and chief of the Edomites<sup>4</sup> lie slain among  
 25 the unconquered, there in the dark; so do all the kings of the north,  
 and the Sidonians, dismayed now and meeting no more in their own  
 26 valour, stripped and shamed. Well may Pharaoh and his men be con-  
 forted by that sight over the multitude of their slain, the Lord God says.  
 27 He too, in this living world, wielded my power; he too lies there, the  
 Lord God says, slain in battle, with the unconquered about him.

<sup>1</sup> In this unusually repetitive passage, there have to the end of the chapter, the LXX version follows the Hebrew text, which is here so different from the Septuagint Greek as to suggest the possibility of a very early corruption in the manuscripts.

<sup>2</sup> This verse does not occur in the Septuagint Greek at all.

<sup>3</sup> How difficult to attack was this man unless it is treated as a question, not a statement. "Their corpses lie to rest yet"; literally, "their bodies were upon their bones"; the absence of dismemberment is perhaps intended.

<sup>4</sup> The mention of the Edomites (the promised circumcisers) is unexpected. According to the Septuagint Greek, we learn in this verse and the next of the Amalekites.

CHAPTER 33

**W**ORD came to me from the Lord: Son of man, tell thy fellow-countryman this: Plague I a country with war, since frontier-dweller is drawn by the citizens to be their squire. Let such a man spy the invader's approach, and sound the alarm with his trumpet; whoever hears it must give good heed, or else the enemy may catch him, and none but himself to blame. What, hear trumpet, and pay no heed? The fault is his. Most curious, he should have found safety. But what if angry, when he sees the invader coming, sounds no alarm to warn his neighbour? Here is some citizen overtaken by the enemy; well, his guilt deserved it. But for his death I will hold the squire accountable.

So it is with thee, son of man; for the whole race of Israel thou art my watchman. Sinner if I threaten with death, and warning thou give him none to leave off his sinning, die he shall, as he deserves to die, but that for his death thou answer to me. If warning thou givest, and he will not leave off his sinning, he dies by his own fault, and thou shalt stand acquitted.

This be thy word, son of man, to the race of Israel: Think you no hope of life is left, so hardened you are, so long as under the guilt of your sin? This message give them from the Lord: As I am a living God, the sinner's death is none of my contriving! I would have him leave his sinning, and live on. Come back, come back from your ill-doing; why now you choose death, men of Israel? And were there, son of man, were thy fellow-countrymen that, were the upright man falls a-sinching, his uprightness shall nothing avail him. Sinner that will leave his sinning, no harm shall he have; upright man that sins, no life shall his uprightness bring him. Promise I the upright he shall live on, he will not by his own uprightness be emboldened to sin; forgotten, all his good deserves, his guilt shall be his undoing. Therefore I the sinner with instant death, he is less but to repent of his sin, so innocently and uprightly. Remove the sinner's pledge, the ill-gotten gains, follow the life-giving law, forswear ill-doing, and it shall be life, not death for him. Forgotten, all his ill-deserving; innocent and upright, he shall live on. And yet they say, these fellow-countrymen of thine, that the Lord's dealings are inconsistent, when in truth it is they that deal inconsistently. Death for the upright is that is upright no more, and turns ill-doer; life for the sinner that will leave his sinning, upright and innocent now! Will you still have it that the Lord's dealings are inconsistent? Nay, men of Israel, each of you shall have his doom.

It was in the twentieth year of the exile, on the fifth day of the month is

10 much, that a fugitive came to me with the news that Jerusalem had  
 11 been fallen. That night, the power of the Lord had visited me, to raise up my  
 12 lips in readiness for his coming; so now I could speak out, and was drunk  
 13 no longer. And a message came to me from the Lord: Son of man, what  
 14 are they saying, the folk that now inhabit your ruins of Israel? Through  
 15 of us, they say, to be the true heirs of this land! Abraham was granted  
 16 a possession of it when he was all alone.<sup>1</sup> Tell them this from the Lord  
 17 God: You, that soak your meat with the blood in it, that look to take  
 18 a god for aid, that thrive by murder, the land's heirs! You, that live by the  
 19 sword, that practice foul rites, that dishonour your neighbours' wives,  
 20 the land's heirs! This is the Lord's message to them: As I am a living  
 21 God, now-dwelling, the sword shall be your ruler! Or choose you the  
 22 open country, you shall be a prey to the wild beasts; choose you mount-  
 23 ains and-dunes and cave, the parchment shall take you. A lonely desert this  
 24 land shall be, all its proud hosts as an oak, the full-country of Israel shall  
 25 be desolate, untrampled by wayfarers; desert and desolate their land  
 26 must be, in punishment of all their foul doings, before they learn to  
 27 recognise my power.

28 And thou, son of man, listen to what they are saying of thee, as they  
 29 stand close to wall, huddled under doorway. Each says to his neighbour, Come  
 30 and find out whether the Lord has any message for us. Ay, they come  
 31 crowding about thee, this people of mine, and sit huddled with thee,  
 32 listening to all thou sayest, but do thy bidding they will not. Na, they  
 33 will have their day in their own time,<sup>2</sup> and all their thought dwells upon  
 34 gain ill-gotten. As well had it been some harmful air, rising evilly  
 35 to well better listeners than couldst not have, one less achievement. But  
 36 when thy words come true, as come true they shall, none shall doubt  
 37 that they have had a prophet in their midst.

## CHAPTER 34

1 **W**ORD came to me from the Lord: Now, son of man, prophesy  
 2 down to the rulers of Israel, the shepherds of my flock. This is thy  
 3 message from the Lord God: Out upon Israel's shepherds, that had a

<sup>1</sup> The sentence, 'Abraham was but one, and we are many' appears somewhere  
 twice. It seems but possible that this paragraph is addressed, not to Jews, but  
 the heathen still living in Palestine, who have not descended from Abraham,  
 and have exposed their intention of disputing his inheritance. It is perhaps worth  
 noting that the act of soaking meat with the blood in it (verse 24) is not other-  
 wise mentioned among the delinquencies of Israel.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'they have their day' (they would have a song of their words). The  
 Hebrew text seems to mean 'they make laws in their mouths,' but the 'Society'  
 the Septuagint Church has 'then.'



flock no food, and fed none but themselves; the milk drunk, the wool  
 1 weaned, the fat lambs slaughtered, but pastured these sheep of mine  
 2 none at all! The mangled frame went unburied, the sick unhealed nor bound  
 3 stay the broken limb, nor brought strayed sheep home, nor lost sheep  
 found; fowls and carrion were all the government they knew. So my  
 4 sheep felt wandering, that shepherd had none; every wild beast did  
 prey on them, and they scattered far and wide. All over the hills  
 5 they strayed, all over the countryside were scattered, this flock of mine,  
 and no search was made for them, no search at all. This doeth, then, the  
 6 Lord proverbs to you, shepherds! As I am a living God, I will have  
 a reckoning for sheep of mine carried off, sheep of mine the wild beasts  
 have preyed on, while they were all unguided, with shepherds that would  
 not go in search of them, shepherds that no flock would feed, but  
 themselves only. A word, shepherds, for your hearing, a message from the  
 7 Lord God. O ye you shepherds! I will hold them accountable for  
 the flock entrusted to them, and they shall have charge of it no more,  
 feed themselves out of its carcasses no more. From their greedy power  
 I will remove it; no longer shall it be their prey.

This is what the Lord God says: I mean to go looking for this flock of  
 11 mine, search it out for myself. As a shepherd, when he finds his flock is  
 scattered all about him, goes looking for his sheep, so will I go looking  
 for these sheep of mine, rescue them from all the snares into which they  
 have strayed when the dark night fell upon them. Rescued from every  
 12 kingdom, recovered from every land, I will bring them back to their own  
 country; they shall have pasture on the hill-sides of Israel, by its water-  
 courses, in the resting-places of their home. Yea, I will lead them out  
 13 into fair pastures, the high mountains of Israel shall be their feeding-  
 ground, the mountains of Israel, with soft grass for them to rest on, rich  
 feed for them to graze. Food and rest, says the Lord God, both these I  
 14 will give to my flock. The lost sheep I will find, the strayed sheep I will  
 bring home again; bind up the broken flesh, nourish the wasted frame,  
 keep the well-fed and the sturdy free from harm; they shall have a true  
 shepherd at last.

And what of you, my flock? I mean to do justice, the Lord God says, to  
 among the beasts themselves, give refuge against the rams and the buck-  
 goats. What, was it not enough to have stripped the pasture-lands with  
 your grazing, drunk all that was purest out of the streams, but you must  
 trample and foul all that was left? None but trampled fields must my  
 15 sheep graze, none but fouled waters drink? This is what the Lord God  
 says: I mean to see justice done between the beast and man. Turn back to

<sup>1</sup> 'Keep . . . from being taken' the Septuagint Greek has 'destroy,' which  
 would lend to only a very slight alteration in the Hebrew.

with side and shoulder, pored with the horns, all the weaker of them have  
 19 been slain among; but now I mean to pasture this flock of mine against  
 your greed, give hear notice against its fellow.

20 . . . They shall have a single shepherd to tend all of them now;<sup>1</sup> who  
 21 should tend them but my servant David? He shall be their shepherd, and  
 I, the Lord, will be their God, now that he rules them on earth; such is  
 22 my divine promise to them. Removal of my servants shall grant them  
 security: beasts of prey there shall be none, safe resting, now, in the  
 23 desert, safe sleeping in the woods; on my hill-sides they shall dwell, a  
 blessed people in a blessed home, rain in its season fall on them, and  
 24 blessings all the while. Wild trees their fruit, the earth its crops shall  
 afford; undisturbed they shall dwell on their own lands, acknowledging  
 my power as lord, my power that rescued them of pain, rescued them from  
 25 the giant's hand. Forgotten, the enemies that depopled, the wild hosts  
 26 are that payed on them; they will live sheltered from all alarm. Once more  
 their ravens shall begone;<sup>2</sup> never again the land starve with drought,  
 27 never the alien's trumbe be heard. None shall doubt that I, the Lord their  
 God, am at their side, and they are my own people, the race of Israel, the  
 28 Lord God says. Flock of mine, the Lord God says, flock of my pasturing,  
 you are but men;<sup>3</sup> yet I, the Lord, am your God.

## CHAPTER 35

1 **W**ORD came to me from the Lord: Son of man, turn thy regard  
 towards the hill-country of Seir, and prophesy its doom. This be  
 the message from the Lord God there at Seir: My land is ruined,  
 2 to ruin thee; desert thou shalt be and desolate; when I have pulled down  
 thy cities and left thee in ruins, thou shalt know my power as lord.  
 3 Rebellious too, didst thou not cut off Israel's return in its most need,  
 4 when doom closed round it? As I am a living God, the Lord says, to  
 bloodshed I doom thee, bloodshed shall hunt thee down, the very  
 5 bloodshed that thou dost in Seir.<sup>6</sup> Do thou and desert mount Seir

<sup>1</sup> The rest of the chapter, from this verse onwards, has a different setting and a different emphasis from what goes before; there may have been some confusion or misplacement.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, in the Hebrew text, 'I will raise up a planting for them for ravens.'

This is usually interpreted as implying a successful development of agriculture; the protecting givers above perhaps make the sentence less faint.

<sup>3</sup> Or poverty. 'you are men' (as opposed to dumb beasts). But in either case the contrast seems recalled for, and there is some reason to doubt whether the text has been accurately preserved; the Septuagint Greek has simply, 'you are the sheep of my flock and I am your God.'

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'I have created thee (or appointed thee) in the Lulim, I will lead

shall be, some come and go there, every crum of it piled high with the slain. Sain they shall fall, the warriors, by hill-slope and valley and ravine, all these are left solitary for all time, thy cities uninhabited, so a thee shalt whence my power. Two nations and two countries (thy house is war), and both are mine;<sup>1</sup> to me is left the enjoyment of them: forgetting that I, the Lord, dwell there. As I am a living God, the Lord says, the rushing girdle that embroiled thee thou shalt feel to thy cost; by the doom I execute upon thee, Israel shall learn to know me better; and thou too shalt learn that I, the Lord, was listening, when thy arrogance claimed the deserted hill-country for thy prey. I was listening to all those defiant blasphemies of thine, and now, says the Lord God, let all the world rejoice as it will, thou shalt lie desolate. Rejoice greatly as they shall be, mount Seir and all Edom, that triumphed in the ruin of Israel: the Lord's power shall be made known at last.

## CHAPTER 36

AND now, son of man, to the mountains of Israel address thy prophecy, and give them my divine message, comforting them, in the name of the Lord God, for the reason of the enemy, that think to claim possession of their ancient strongholds. Thus shall thy word of prophecy begin: Desolate you lie, the Lord God says, and evenness by the invaders, since have the lordship of you, and your name is no men's life, a byword of common talk. Yet here is word for you, assurance of Israel, from the Lord God; word from him for crag and hill, pasture and valley and barren upland, ruined well and deserted city, empty now and a mockery to their neighbours! On Seir, on all the Gileads that fell as I and deserted on lands of mine, marked them down for pillage, my indignation have pronounced down. A promise, then, from the Lord God to every mountain and hill, every upland and valley in the land of Israel! Till now, the Lord God says, you have been put to the blush before your neighbours, but now my love and my indignation can contain itself no more. My wrath is open to, the Lord God says, these neighbours of yours shall be put to the blush in their turn.

that every eye be blind, and blood shall pursue them; I vision that there have been blood, and blood shall pursue them.' The word 'blind' is not used in the Hebrew in the sense of 'invisible', and it is not easy to see why the Edomites are rebuked for 'being blind,' unless possibly in the sense that they closed their freedom at the time of Judah's defeat, or kept the war out of their own territory. But there is reason to suspect that the text is corrupt.

<sup>1</sup> The 'two nations and two countries' are usually identified as Israel and Judah. But it may be questioned whether the reference is not to Israel (generally) and Edom (cf. Gen. 25.19).

- 8 But you, mountains of Israel, must bring forth arms, and give fruit to  
 9 my own people to enjoy; their home-coming is not far off now. When  
 10 for me, I am coming back to you; soil of you shall be ploughed and sown  
 11 in me; and then, too, shall thrive on it, Israel's full harvest-corn, peopling  
 12 the cities, restoring the ruins. Full till you shall have of men and beasts  
 13 that thrive and multiply; I will make you populous as of old, more than  
 14 of old my blessings lavish, and you shall not doubt my power. Master  
 15 you shall have, and those masters my people of Israel, your rightly  
 16 lords; never shall they want lands as you lack again. Till now, the Lord  
 17 God says, men have called thee a land that starves folk and smokes  
 18 cracks;<sup>1</sup> henceforth, his will is that thou shouldst starve thy folk, because  
 19 thy folk, no longer; soil and waste of heathen neighbours thou wilt have  
 20 come to bear, he says, our last even to till thee henceforward.
- 21 This now. Son of man, how the race of Israel profaned this country a  
 22 statue, when they still dwelt in it, by their lives and their things? Can  
 23 a clow of woman were less defiling. What marvel if my vengeance we  
 24 be look on them for all the blood that stained it, all the idols that polluted  
 25 it? What marvel if I drive them out among the nations, scattered they  
 26 wide as earth, as lives and things of theirs had deserved? But also  
 27 wherever they went among the heathen, they brought my holy name into  
 28 ill repute; These are the Lord's people, folk said, and here they are, called  
 29 from the land he loved! Should I let my holy name go unobserved  
 30 among the heathen that harboured them?
- 31 Give Israel, then, this message from the Lord God: It is not for you  
 32 even taken, sons of Israel, that I come forward as your champion; it is for  
 33 the sake of my holy name, brought into disrepute among the Gentiles  
 34 who have crossed your path. That great reason of mine I want to vindicate,  
 35 that is now dragged in the dust among the Gentiles, dragged in the  
 36 dust because of you. The very Gentiles will recognise my power, the  
 37 Lord God says, when I proclaim my majesty in their sight by delivering  
 38 you.<sup>2</sup> I mean to set you free from the power of the Gentiles, bring you  
 39 home again from every part of the earth. And then I will pour cleansing  
 40 streams over you, to purge you from every stain you bear, purge you  
 41 from the stain of your iniquity. I will give you a new heart, and breathe  
 42 a new spirit into you; I will take away from your breasts those hearts

<sup>1</sup> Literally, "Thou art a desert of men, that is without (in the Latin, without) the population." This was perhaps a proverbial saying about Palestine (Hos. 12.11). The suggestion here is probably that it was not fertile enough to support a large number of inhabitants, but the reference may be to the misfortune of Israel in general.

<sup>2</sup> vs. 38-39. The suggestion is, not that the Gentiles in exile brought disrepute to the true religion by their idolatry, but that the heathen looked with contempt on a God who seemed unable to protect his people.

that are hard as stone, and give you human hearts instead. I will make *my* spirit penetrate you, so that you will follow in the path of my law, remember and carry on my decrees. So shall you make your home in the land I promised to your fathers; you shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will set you free from the guilt which stains you;<sup>1</sup> I will send my word to the harvest, and bid it come up abundantly, from drought spare you; yield of trees and crop of earth I will multiply, and the heathen shall trust you no longer with your starving lot. What may you think with longing of what you were, as your minds go back to false paths and crowded streets you once followed! Be assured of it, the Lord is God says, it was for the deserts of years I delivered you; think still, men of Israel, for your crimes, hang your heads still!

This too: A time is coming when I will set you free from the guilt which stains you, when I will people your cities, rebuild your cities; when the desolate land shall be filled anew. Denote the passers-by saw as it once; now they will say, Why, it is a very garden of Eden, the country-side which once lay all unharboured; the empty towns, all gone to ruin and ruin, are walled and populous! And the heathen shall know, such as heathen as are your neighbours still, that I, the Lord, rebuild ruin and plant wilderness; what the Lord promises, the Lord fulfils. This too, says the Lord God, Israel shall yet have of me, as a flock shall their number shall thrive. See how the victim-herd throngs the streets of Jerusalem on her feast-days! Yonder empty cities shall be thronged, too, but with men; the proof of my divine power.

## CHAPTER 37

THE Lord's power laid hold of me, and by the spirit of the Lord . . . I was carried away and set down in the midst of the plain, which was covered with bones.<sup>2</sup> Round the whole extent of them he took me, and hanged up high on the plain, and all of them parched quite dry. Son of man, he said, can life return to these bones? Lord God, said I, thou knowest. Then he bade me utter a prophecy over the bones: Lichen, dry bones, is the word of the Lord. A message to these bones from the Lord I mean to send my spirit into you, and restore you to life. Shewers shall be given you, flesh shall grow on you, and skin cover you, and I will give you breath to bring you to life again; will you doubt, then, the Lord's power?

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'I will save you from your stain's; but in verse 31, 'I will cleanse you from your guilt.'

<sup>2</sup> We should expect to find the date or place of the vision specified, and some think there is an omission in the manuscript.

1 So I prophesied as he had bidden me, and as I prophesied a sound  
 came, and I felt a stirring, and the bones came together, each to its proper  
 2 joint; under my eyes the shores and the flesh clothed them, and the skin  
 3 covered them, but there was no breath in them even now. Son of man, he  
 said, prophesy now to the breath of life; give the breath of life itself this  
 message from the Lord God: Come, breath of life, from the four winds,  
 4 and breathe on these slain men so that they may live. So I prophesied as he  
 had bidden me, and the breath of life came into them, so that they lived  
 5 again; and all rose to their feet, bent upon bent of them. Then he said to  
 6 me, Son of man, do these bones have thou rest the whole mass of Israel. They  
 are complaining that their very bones have withered away, that all hope  
 7 is lost, they are dead men. It is for thee to prophesy, giving them this  
 message from the Lord God: I mean to open your graves and revive you,  
 8 my people; I mean to bring you home to the land of Israel. Will you  
 doubt, then, the Lord's power, when I open your graves and revive you?  
 9 When I breathe my spirit into you, to give you life again, and bid you  
 dwell at peace in your own land? What the Lord promises, the Lord  
 performs; you will know that, he will you, at last.  
 10 And word came to me from the Lord: Son of man, take two pieces of  
 wood, and write on one, For Juda, and the tribes of Israel that take part  
 with him; on the other, that is the stick of Ephraim, write, For Joseph,  
 11 and all the tribes of Israel that take part with him. Then join them  
 together into the form of a single stick, so that they are united in thy  
 12 hand. And when thy fellow-countrymen would have thee tell them what  
 13 thou meanest by all this, give them this message from the Lord: Here  
 is this stick of Joseph and his multitude of tribes, with Ephraim at their  
 head; I mean to join it with Juda's and make one stick of it, one stick now,  
 and in my hand.<sup>1</sup>

14 And while thou art still holding the inscribed sticks, there is the  
 15 presence of thy fellow-countrymen, say this: A message from the Lord  
 God: I mean to recall the sons of Israel from their exile among the  
 Gentiles, gather them from every side and restore them to their home.  
 16 And there, in the hill country of Israel, I will make one nation of them,  
 with one king over them all; no longer shall they be two nations under  
 17 two crowns. No more shall they be separated with idol-worship,  
 and foul rites, and forbidden things a restraint; I will deliver them from  
 the hands that were once the means of their sinning, and make them clean

<sup>1</sup> The Lxxv version gives 'in his hand.' See probably meaning 'the Lord's hand,' and assuming a break in the connection. The Septuagint Greek has 'to Judah's hand,' that is, 'with Juda at their head.'

The word means 'dwelling-places' or 'places of assembly,' and is used in the above for an idol's pedestal. But probably these verses are right who think that, by a slight error of copying, our text gives us 'dwelling-places' instead of 'open-tains,' which is the meaning of the Septuagint Greek.

again; they shall be my people, and I will be their God. They shall have as one king over them, a shepherd to feed them all, my servant David; my will they shall follow, my commands they shall observe and obey. And they shall have shall be the home of your flocks, the land I gave to my servant Jacob; they and their children shall enjoy it, and their children's children, to perpetuity, and ever my servant David shall be their prince. My covenant shall pledge them property, a covenant that shall never be revoked; I will make them . . .<sup>2</sup> and give them increase, and set up my sanctuary in their midst for ever. My tabernacle over them; they my people, and I their God; proof to all the world that I, the Lord, have not forsaken Israel apart, I that dwell apart in their midst for ever.

## CHAPTER 38

WORLD came to me from the Lord: Son of man, turn thy regard now towards Gog, Magog's country, that has the lordship of Mesoch and Thubal, and prophesy in this way.<sup>3</sup> This be thy message to it from the Lord God: Have at thee, Gog, that hast the lordship of Mesoch and Thubal! Trust me, I will turn thee about this way and that, bridle those jaws of thine! I will bring thee out to battle, with all thy army, with horses and mailed cavalry, with a great company that ply spear and shield and sword. Persians shall be there, and Ethiopians, and Libyans, all with shield and helmet, Gomer with his hordes, the men of Thogorma from the northern hills, summoned in full force; what an array thou hast about thee! Now hold thyself in readiness, marshal thy own strength and the hordes that follow thee; thou art the leadership.

Long hence thy men shall come; long years must pass before thou dost

<sup>2</sup> Or perhaps, 'I will give them'; in either case, it seems as if there had been an omission in the manuscript. The Latin version reads, *sem inconvicti*, 'I will found them.'

<sup>3</sup> If our text, in this verse and the verse which follows, has been correctly preserved, we are here meant to think of Gog as a people, not as a person; if our identification is maintained, it is Magog. Mesoch and Thubal appear to be the Mesek and Tibarat, from the northern shores of the Black Sea; a general descent of barbarians is clearly envisaged, comparable to the Scythian invasions of A.D. 890. But the names mentioned in verse 4 suggest that the place is not of Europe, rather than of Libya, and the identification of 'Gog' with the Persian emperor Cambyses or with Antiochus Epiphanes are probably misplaced guesses. What is meant by the 'prince of the land' or 'prince of the host' is not clear; the expression is not elsewhere found, and it is perhaps worth observing that it might easily be a false reading in the Hebrew for 'one who lifts the host' (i.e., someone the falling down of a man or a commander (Gen. 49.17, IV Kg. 23.29, Job. 1.11). Thubal and Mesek are undergoing a kind of resurrection, cf. 31.26 above.

- march on Israel; a land, now, recovered from its blood-letting, its kills,  
 declares till now, are repopled with calves from many towns, come back  
 to dwell there in security. Scorn never rose so suddenly, cloud-rack  
 cover: darkness it so bravely, as those with that host of thine, those  
 confederate leaders. What thoughts will be in thy heart that day, the  
 Lord God says, what final design will be a-coming? Why, thou wilt  
 think to march on a land unfortified, a people dwelling free from all  
 alarms, that walk about their have none, tell not but to that thou art  
 sped for the spoiling, plunder for thy plundering. Easily enough they are  
 like to fall into thy hand, the rain so lately relent, the men restored  
 from exile, that hold but the heart of the country,<sup>1</sup> and are already  
 enriched! Small wonder if the orders of Saba, Dedan and Tharshish,  
 numerous hosts all, would know whether it is plunder thy heart is set on!  
 Such a number of men, it can but mean spoils silver and gold to rife,  
 stock and stuff to carry away, ay, there is spoil behind this, and spoil  
 with the taking!  
 Prophecy, thou, too of men, and make known to Gog this divine mes-  
 sage: None better wiser of it than thou, when thy people of Israel is living  
 at peace, thou from storms! Then it is thou who comes down from those  
 northern heights, with thy hosts about thee, thy troops of country, a  
 great number, as army invincible, sweeping down on my people of  
 Israel like a cloud that overshadows the land. Offspring of that late age,  
 thou shalt march on tender land of mine, so that is Gog's doom thy  
 power may be vindicated, and the heathen may learn what I am. Long  
 years ago, the Lord God says, there were servants of mine that formed  
 my will concerning thee, and even then warned Israel, in my name, of  
 thy coming.  
 When Gog marches against Israel, the Lord God says, my indignation  
 thou wilt contain itself no longer. Jealous love and fierce anger of mine,  
 I swear it, shall throw all the land of Israel into commotion. Fish in sea,  
 bird in air, beast on earth and all the creeping things of earth shall  
 tremble at my presence, and the world of men, too, shall tremble; moun-  
 tains be overturned, defences rot, walls come toppling to the ground.  
 All through this hill-country of mine my word shall run, The sword! And  
 with that, the Lord says, Gog shall turn his sword against friends  
 and evil: they shall have of pestilence and of blood-letting, of lacking women  
 and great hail-storms, fire and brimstone I will rain down upon them,

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'they are inhabitants of the sword of the land (in, with)'.  
 For the phrase, cf. 14-15; the suggestion seems to be that the newly-revived  
 people is too small in numbers to occupy more than the central portion of its  
 territory. There is no reason to think that Jerusalem is here being described as  
 the centre of the habitable globe, although 3:1 above would help to justify such  
 language.



all that great army and the hordes that follow with it. My greatness, my holiness, shall then be displayed for a world of nations to see, and they will recognise my power in me.

## CHAPTER 39

**P**ROMISE, then, son of man, the doom of Gog; be this the divine message thou givest him: Thus saith the Lord God, that hath the lordship of Mesoch and Tibellai. This way and that I will turn thee, whither thou wilt, and bid thee leave thy northern heights, to march against the hill-country of Israel; then, I will strike powder from thee from thy left hand, will the arrows from thy right! Host and horse of thine shall fall with thee on the mountains of Israel, castles for every blade in air, every beast on earth: none among on the bare ground shall shall lie, such is my doom for thee, the Lord God says. Such a fire I will light as shall reach Magog, and others besides, island-dwellers far away that have no thought of peril; they too shall know my power. Among my own people of Israel my nation shall spread, and never more shall my holy name be dragged in the dust; the heathen shall know what manner of God it is that dwells apart in Israel.

When all is over and done, and my day of doom past, the townsfolk of Israel will come out to gather huddling-wood and fire-wood out of the woods that were left, shield and spear, bow and arrow, staff and pole; and they will be seven years a-burning. All that iron, faggots will stick to the countryside together, and never one will be laid to forest tree; weapons of war shall be all their fuel, spoil of the spoiler, plunder of the plunderer, the Lord God says. Then, too, Gog shall have a burying-place named after him, there in Israel, none other than the Valley of the Wayfaring, east of the Dead Sea, a thing of wonder to all that pass by. There they shall bury Gog with all the rabble that came after him, and Valley of Gog's Rabble the place shall be called. Seven months' work Israel shall have burying them, and cleansing the land from its defilement; all the citizens shall take part in it, and shall commemorate that day as the day on which I was vindicated, says the Lord God. Even when the seven months are over, some there will be whose office it is to search over the countryside, finding those remains and burying them, to rid the land of defilement; still they will be scouring these places, and setting up a mark where they see man's bones lie, for the grave-diggers to bury them, there in the Valley of Gog's Rabble; Annona, that will be the name of it. And so the land shall be cleansed.

This too, Son of man, here is a message for every blade in air, every beast that roams the earth. Come all, come with haste, gather from every

side for the sacrificial feast I am making for you, a great feast as the  
 21 splendor of Israel, flesh to eat, blood for your drinking! Flesh of fighting  
 22 men, blood of the world's great ones; never was run or lamb, never was  
 23 a goat or bull, or well fed or so daintily! Glazed with fat, drunk you shall  
 24 be with blood, at this feast of mine; horse and beast ridden, warriors of  
 high rank and low, see the cheer they shall have at my table, says the Lord  
 God.

25 In glory I will reveal myself to the Gentiles, the doors I have opened,  
 26 the power I have exerted, shall be for all to see; nor shall Israel doubt  
 27 is therefore that I, the Lord, set their God. All the world shall know  
 28 why it was that Israel was in banishment, why I turned my back on  
 29 them and gave them up to enemies; that it was because they wronged  
 30 me and despised me; that it was foul crime of their hands not shown  
 31 to them. I mean to rescue Jacob from exile, the Lord God says, and  
 32 extend my mercy to the whole race of Israel; the honour of my name  
 33 demands it. The disgrace, the punishment of all their guilt, they needs  
 must bear . . .<sup>1</sup>

... when they are dwelling safely in their own land, free from all  
 34 alarm; when I have brought them back from banishment among  
 35 strangers, in hostile countries, and so, before the whole world's eyes,  
 36 a God by honour. They shall know at last that I, the Lord, am their  
 37 God; if it was I that drove them into captivity, it was I, too, that rescued  
 38 them to their home, not a man of them left in exile. And I will turn away  
 from them no longer, I, that have poured out my spirit on the whole race  
 of Israel.

## CHAPTER 40

IT was the tenth day of the month, the twenty-fifth year of our banish-  
 39 ment, and the fourteenth since the fall of the city, was just beginning.  
 40 This was the precise day upon which the Lord's power came over me,  
 41 and I fell into a transport: in which transport, so the divine revelation  
 42 would have it, I was carried off to the country of Israel. There, I found  
 43 myself on the top of a very high mountain, that seemed to have a city  
 44 built on it, sloping away towards the south. Into this city I was taken,  
 45 and there met a man whose look dazzled the eye like bronze; he stood  
 46 there in the gateway, holding a flaxen cord and a measuring-rod. The  
 47 open eye, one of man, said he, the open ear, and mark well all I show

<sup>1</sup> If the eye has been correctly transcribed, it seems clear that some words  
 (perhaps not many) have dropped out. But it has been suggested that the word  
 'they must bear' might be a writer's error for 'they shall bear.'

third: There was brought here to see, and tell the men of Israel what they saw.<sup>1</sup>

There was an outer wall that ran round the whole building, which he measured with his rod, that was six cubits and a palm<sup>2</sup> in length; a rod's thickness there was in the wall, and a rod's height; when he came to the gate at the eastern approach and had ascended the stairs of it, the entry-way was spanned by a single rod, so it proved that the wall was of a rod's thickness. Within were guard-chambers, three cubits square and five cubits apart; then came an inner gateway, a rod's length deep; then an inner entrance-hall, measuring eight cubits across, with pillars two cubits thick. This inner gateway had three guard-chambers on each side, alike in size, and alike in size the pillars between them. The entrance of the gateway was two cubits across, and the span of the gateway itself thirteen cubits; on either side the six-cubit guard-chamber was set a cubit back. From gate-window of guard-chamber to gate-window of guard-room opposite was twenty-five cubits.<sup>3</sup> (And he made the whole length of the colonnade sixty cubits, but this was measuring right up to the pillars which stood one round the gateway);<sup>4</sup> the distance from the outer gate to the inner was fifty cubits . . . and closing six doors in the guard-chambers and in the thickness of the wall that separated them, all round the gateway the hall, too, within had its windows all round, and there was a pattern of palm-trees on the pillars between them.

So he led me into the outer courtyard, which was surrounded by porches, that had the ground about them paved with stone; there were thirty porches standing in this way of pavement. It stretched up to the gateway, and was broad as they were long like them; it was on the level of the ground. And now he measured the distance from the eastern gate of the inner courtyard, where they stood facing one another; it was a hundred cubits.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> All through this chapter, the descriptions are very detailed, and their interpretation is largely a matter of conjecture.

<sup>2</sup> The word palm given due to some difficulty, unless it was a more lucid to hold the rod by. As a measure, the rod was supposed to be cubits only (verses 7 and 12). The Hebrew text probably means that each cubit was the length of a forearm and a palm (cf. 43.25 below).

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'And he measured the gate from roof of guard-chamber to roof of guard-chamber, a width of twenty-five cubits, door against door for opening against opening.'

<sup>4</sup> The rendering given shows some preference to one which would evidently introduce us to pillars six cubits high. But it does not look as if the text had been seriously pressed; we have been told nothing of these projecting columns, and there is no reason to think that the Hebrews used the expression 'to make' in our modern sense. It means as if there must be a gap in the manuscript or for end of verse 25.

<sup>5</sup> The eastern gate's description is given for the sake of distance, in the

As with the east, so with the north length and breadth he made  
 a measure of the outer gate that looked northwards. This, too, was fifty  
 cubits long and twenty-five broad; it had guard-chambers, three on each  
 side, pillar and hall like the other. Hall and windows and window-  
 pillars differed nothing from those of the eastern gate; all was the same,  
 from the seven steps of the approach to the hall within. As on the east,  
 so on the north, the inner court had a gateway matching it, a hundred  
 cubits distant. And now he took me to the south, where there was a fresh  
 gate, which he measured, pillar of it and hall of it, as before: the same  
 windows about the hall, the same length and breadth; the seven steps,  
 the hall at the further end, the pillars with a palm tree patterned on either  
 side. Here, too, a hundred cubits away, was a gateway on the south side  
 of the inner courtyard.

It was through this southern gateway of it that we entered the inner  
 courtyard itself, a gateway with the same measurements as before, guard-  
 chamber and pillar and hall. It had the same windows and window-  
 pillars, the same length and breadth, and the porch round it was twenty-  
 five cubits long, five cubits broad.<sup>1</sup> The pillars had the same pattern,  
 but this time the hall was on the inner side of the gateway, and there  
 were eight steps instead of seven. Then he took me to the east side of the  
 inner court, with the same measurements, guard-chamber and pillar and  
 hall, windows and window-pillars, length and breadth; the pillared hall  
 again facing the outer court, the steps eight in number. And now to the  
 northern gate, with the same measurements still, guard-chamber and  
 pillar and hall and windows and length and breadth; the pillared hall  
 facing outward, the eight steps.

... and each gate-chamber had a door, between pillars. This was  
 where they waited the victims for burnt-sacrifice; and in the hall of the  
 entrance-way there were two tables on each side, for the laying of the  
 victims, whether it were a burnt-sacrifice, or some offering for a fault or  
 for a wrong doing. On the outer side of the gateway, towards the north  
 gate, and again on the opposite side, there were two more tables, close to  
 the hall. Thus altogether there were eight tables ranged along the side  
 of the entrance-way, all for sacrifice. And for the burnt-sacrifice there  
 were four other tables of brass, square, a cubit and a half square, and a

original it is 'the lower gate,' because (as the sweeping verse has explained) the whole outer court was lower (by eight steps) than the inner court. As for the end of this verse, the original has 'northwards and southwards'; the only possible rendering of the words appears to be that given at the beginning of the new paragraph.

<sup>1</sup> This verse is very difficult. The word 'porch' is the same as that elsewhere rendered 'hall,' but the hall or lobby of each gate was not of the measurements here stated; a portion jutting out from the building seems the only explanation of the term as it stands.

cubit in height, here they laid the instrument needed for sacrifice and offering; they had lodges, too, starting upwards all round, a palm in a breadth, for these lodges must also hold the flesh of the victims.

In the inner court itself, beyond the gateway, the singers had their lodging, on the north side, facing south. There was a parlous, too, at the side of the inner gate, facing . . . north;<sup>1</sup> the one facing south, he told us, was for the priests who kept watch over the temple, the one facing north for the priests who are linked with the service of the altar, Sadok's Levites, that were the Lord's privileged ministers. The court, with the altar standing in it, was a hundred cubits square.

Then he led me to the porch of the temple; the jamb on either side was as five cubits deep, and the width of the gate . . . three cubits on either side;<sup>2</sup> the porch itself was twenty cubits long and eleven broad. As we climbed up the right steps to it, there were columns facing us, one on either side.

## CHAPTER 41

SO he brought me into the temple, between pillars that were six cubits square by cubits measure.<sup>3</sup> The door was ten cubits across, the rooms behind the doorway five cubits on either side; the whole length of the outer temple was fifty cubits, and the width twenty. Then he went into the inner sanctuary, measuring the doorway, two cubits thick, the door, six cubits across, and the width of the rooms behind the doorway, seven cubits. Each side had the length of the side next to the outer temple, twenty cubits. Here, he said, all is holiness.

Then he measured the temple wall, which was six cubits thick; it was flanked all round by rooms four cubits square. There were sixty of these rooms, in three storeys one on the top of another; and their upper storeys jutted out all round the temple wall, but keeping apart from it; the temple wall must not be touched. And there was a round stair-case which went up in a spiral to this upper loft of the temple building, which projected outwards for that very reason; there was thus an easy passage from the lower to the middle, and from the middle to the upper storey.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Facing . . . north; the verbal reason is simply an addition. The prophet must surely have written, 'facing south, and a corresponding parlous facing north.'

<sup>2</sup> According to the Septuagint Greek, we should read 'the width of the gate measured cubits, having a flank gate of wall on either side, three cubits in width.'

<sup>3</sup> This whole chapter is even more obscure than the last, and it is difficult to believe that here not least sentences, if not facts of copying, is the last.

<sup>4</sup> vs. 6, 7. Cf. III Kg. 26.26 here, at least, it seems clear that the rooms at the side must have no architectural connexion with the sacred walls of the temple itself; beyond that, nothing is clear. The projecting above assumes the accuracy of the Latin version; it differs widely both from the Hebrew text and

7 The building, I saw, was all raised above the ground; the roof showed  
 7 that the ground level of the rooms was six cubits up. The rooms were  
 at a distance of five cubits beyond the temple wall, and they enclosed  
 a hall around;<sup>1</sup> and there was a close of twenty cubits<sup>2</sup> within between these  
 11 and a line of pavilions which flanked the temple. The doors of the inner  
 rooms lay out, to north and south, so a porch-way,<sup>3</sup> five cubits in width,  
 which ran round the temple.

13 Round this again was the close of twenty cubits, and beyond that, as  
 the wall, a pavilion twenty cubits by ninety, with a wall five cubits thick.  
 15 He showed me that the temple was a hundred cubits long; the close with  
 15 the pavilion beyond it, including its walls, a hundred cubits long; the  
 eastern face of the temple, with the close on each side of it, a hundred  
 17 cubits long; and the breadth from side to side of the pavilion beyond the  
 close (with its galleries) a hundred cubits long . . .<sup>4</sup>

... and the inner sanctuary, and the hall that gave up to the court-  
 19 yard, the doorway, the slanting windows, the galleries that went round  
 on three sides, over the several doorways; all were completely paneled in  
 wood. The paneling ran right up to the windows, which it framed, right  
 21 up to the top level of the doorway; ran all the way round to meet the  
 21 inner sanctuary, keeping the same height within and without it. The  
 design was of alternate cherubs and palm-trees, and each cherub had two  
 23 faces, showing like a man towards one palm-tree and like a young lion  
 23 towards the other; the same pattern ran all through the building, carved  
 cherubs and palm-trees on each wall from ground level to the height  
 of the door's lintel.

25 The entrance of the temple stood square, facing the inner sanctuary,  
 25 facing the glass, which was of wood, three feet high, and two feet across;  
 corners and slab and sides were all of wood. This, he told me, is the  
 27 table that stands in the Lord's presence.<sup>5</sup> Outer temple, inner sanctuary.

from the Septuagint Greek, which are unintelligible. It is not easy to see why  
 projecting upper awnings should have needed especially well with a spiral  
 stair-case. According to the Hebrew text, there were three awnings of thirty  
 rooms each; the Latin version may imply three awnings of twenty rooms, or one  
 awning of thirty three rooms each.

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text seems to imply that there was a five-foot wall outside  
 the rooms all round, as well as a six-foot wall inside. But it is not likely that so  
 many rooms should have been made enclosing an open courtyard.

<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew text simply 'an open space of ground.' This seems to have  
 been a narrow strip at the edge of the raised platform; the twenty-foot close  
 was on ground level.

<sup>3</sup> It looks as if there must have been an omission here, to account for the  
 sudden change of subject. "Of this is galleries" is awkward; so explain we should have  
 supposed "including its walls."

<sup>4</sup> This was presumably the door of incense; now, however, usually it with  
 the table on which the sacred fires were exposed (Ex. 40:26, 30, 37).

had two doors each, and either door had leaves that folded together, two leaves on each door, with the same pattern of chevron and palm-rose as that the walls had. To match this, the outer porch was faced with thick beams<sup>2</sup> reaching up to the level of the glazing windows; thick beams figured with palm-rose in either sense . . . matching the width of the rooms and of the temple walls.

# CHAPTER 42

THESE he took me into the outer court again, the northern part of it, and would have me see the parlours that lay there, close to the pavilions and to the northern side of the temple.<sup>3</sup> The long side of them, facing the north door, was a hundred cubits, the breadth fifty; between the twenty-cubit close of the inner court, and the paving of the nave, they rose, gallery upon gallery, three storeys in all. In front of them was a walk ten cubits wide, encroaching on the inner court by one cubit; all their doors faced the north. Here, the top rooms were narrower, since they must make room for pavilions at the side, built out over the two lower storeys; these three-storeyed parlours had no columns in front of them, like the parlours in the outer court,<sup>4</sup> but made up for it by pavilions that rose from the roof of the first two floors, (filling in the width of the fifty cubits). Inner parlours faced never only with fifty cubits of their wall's length; in the outer court, the parlours were but fifty cubits long, whereas those beside the temple were a hundred. These inner parlours were entered from below at their narrow end, from the outer court . . . in the thickness of the court's eastern wall . . . opposite the pavilion, and here too there were parlours close to the pavilion.<sup>5</sup> Southern parlours, like northern, had a walk in front of them; had the same length and breadth, were entered by doors of the same kind; the doors of these

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew word translated 'thick beams' is of very doubtful significance. The last words of the chapter are difficult to understand, whether in the Hebrew, in the Greek, or in the Latin; if the rest of them is right, it looks as if there had been a fresh edition.

<sup>3</sup> *vs.* 1-12. Once more the original is very obscure, and the interpretation of it far from certain.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'looking towards the towards of a way of one cubit,' an expression from which it is hard to derive any definite meaning. The Septuagint Greek has, 'of a hundred cubits in length,' but this is probably a guess.

<sup>5</sup> The outer parlours are those mentioned in *vs.* 171 where, however, perhaps through some mistake in the manuscripts, there is no mention of a colonnade.

<sup>6</sup> It can hardly be denied that there is some serious disturbance in the text. At the end of the verse, it is clear that the prophet and his guide have gone to measure the southern parlours, corresponding to the northern parlours already described.

portico opened on a walk along their southern side, and the outer entrance was approached at the eastern end, from the walk that faced the hall and the closet.

- 11 These portico, he told me, half is north and south beside the partition, are hallowed precincts, where the priests who sacrifice to the Lord may eat what is set apart for holy uses. All that is set apart, all the offerings made for flesh and for wrong done, shall there be laid out, as on
- 12 holy ground. Now, entering it, shall the priests leave it; for the inner court all at once, here they must lay aside their vestments, for these, too, are hallowed, and put on outer clothes before ever they mingle with the people.
- 13 With that, he made an end of measuring the precincts within, and led me through the eastern doorway, to measure them from without. Along
- 14 the eastern side his rod measured five hundred cubits; five hundred is cubits along the southern side, and five hundred cubits along the southern; westward, too, the measure of it was five hundred cubits. All round the four quarters of the wall he would measure it, five hundred cubits in length as in breadth, this boundary between things sacred and things profane.

## CHAPTER 43

- 1 **T**HEN he took me to the eastern gate, and all at once, from the sun's rising, the bright presence of the God of Israel made merry there. Like the sound of waters in deep flood his voice was, and earth was lit up with the splendour all around. Such was the appearance I had seen of him, when he came bent on the city's destruction, when I saw my vision by the banks of Chebar; down fell I, face to earth. In it came through the eastern gateway, the splendour of the Lord himself; and with that, a transport seized me, carrying me off into the inner court, where already the brightness of the Lord's presence filled the temple.
- 2 Thence it was I heard his voice speaking to me; and the man who stood at my side passed on the message.
- 3 Son of man, he told me, here is my throne; here certainly, in the heart of Israel, is my resting-place. No more shall Israel's folk, Israel's kings, drag my name in the dust with their infidelities, with the dead gods they served, with their bull-sanctuaries.<sup>1</sup> Door next to door of mine, pillar to pillar, only a wall between me; and for the foul things that dragged my

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'with their infidelities, with the ruins of their kings, and with their bull-sanctuaries.' St Jerome understands this as meaning that worship at the bull-sanctuaries brought the kings of Judah to their ruin. But the word used in the Hebrew text means images, not ruins; 'with the images of their kings, their



name in the dust, my vengeance took full rail of them.' Did they then +  
infidels, those dead gods farewell, I will make my eternal home here  
in the midst of them. Think, son of man, to share the ruin of Danel by +  
the sight of powder temple; who measures the fabric of it, shall learn to +  
bleak for his misdeeds. Form and fashion of the temple, gates that lead  
in and out, all the plot of it do these stakes known to them; and what  
afterwards they are that govern the ordering of it. All this they must see  
in writing, and so learn to keep its pattern ever unaltered, its laws ever to  
hold.

Wouldst thou know what the temple's charter is? No part of the answer -  
told, say that lies within its bounds but is my inward sanctuary; that,  
nothing less, is the charter of the temple.

... These measurements the altar had,<sup>2</sup> measured by the true cubit, +  
that is the width of a fore-arm and a palm; first came a gutter, of a cubit's  
depth and a cubit's width, ending in a lip a span broad all round; then the  
altar was destined. Above this gutter, which was at ground level, came the +  
lower base, two cubits high and a cubit across; the upper base rose four  
cubits above it, and was again a cubit wide. The altar proper was four +  
cubits high, with four horns projecting above it, and the sides of it were +  
square, twelve cubits by twelve. The base was also square, fourteen +  
cubits by fourteen, and had a projecting rim half a cubit across; the  
groove under this was a cubit in height. The steps of the altar faced  
westwards ...

Son of man, he said me, when the altar is set up, ready for burnt- +  
sacrifice and for blood-sprinkling, these measurements the Lord God would  
have thee observe. A young bullock the priests must have, those priests +  
of Sadee's line that are my true ministers, for a transgression-sin-offering.  
Horns of the altar, and the four corners of its base, and the rim round +  
about it, thou shalt smear with the victim's blood, to cleanse them and  
purge them of filth, then take the victim itself to a place apart, beyond +  
the temple precincts, and there burn it. Next day, the transgression- +  
sin victim shall be a male kid, without blemish; with salt, as with the oil, the  
oil-measurements;<sup>3</sup> or possibly, 'with the corners of their thighs when they died.'  
It has been supposed that Ezekiel is protesting against the burial of kings close  
to the temple, as a profanation. But no such protest is found elsewhere, and we  
have no evidence that the practice existed. The rendering given above assumes  
that 'kings' is read for 'goats,' as suggested in Am. 4.25. 'Dead gods,' either  
in the sense of 'dead idols,' as in Lev. 24.16, or possibly in reference to the  
worship of Adonis (see 8.14 above). But it seems likely that the manuscripts  
may have been at fault, some copies reading the word 'these things' may come  
by accident.

<sup>2</sup> The prophet is complaining, not that the royal priests defiled the temple,  
but that profane altars were celebrated just beyond its walls; see 8.3 above.

<sup>3</sup> vs. 17-17. It seems possible that this passage has been considerably mis-  
placed. The verse used is it one of very doubtful interpretation.

13 altar must be purged; and when the purging is over, bullock and ram  
 14 must be offered, these too without blemish; when they have been  
 brought into the Lord's presence, and the priests have sprinkled them  
 15 with salt, they must be given to the Lord as burnt-sacrifice. Each day,  
 for seven days, goat and bullock and ram must be offered, all un-  
 16 blemished; purged and cleansed and hallowed the altar must be for  
 27 seven days, and when these are over, on the eighth day and ever after-  
 wards, the priests may use it for burnt-sacrifice and welcome-offering of  
 yours, and I will look favourably on you, the Lord God says.

## CHAPTER 44

1 THEN he brought me back to the eastern gate of the outer precincts,  
 2 that was shut. Now this gate must ever be, the Lord told me,  
 not open its doors to give man entrance again, since the Lord, the God  
 3 of Israel, entered by it. Access to it is none, even for the prince himself,  
 4 as there he may, to eat his share of the welcome-offering, but it is  
 through the hall to the other end of the gateway he comes and goes.  
 5 And so he took me towards the northern gate, in full view of the  
 temple, and all the temple was filled with the brightness of the Lord's  
 6 presence, a sight that brought me to my knees, face to earth. Give good  
 heed, son of man, the Lord said to me; the open eye, the open ear! Heed  
 and observance of the Lord's house I mean to tell thee; of the temple,  
 7 and who may approach it, of my sanctuary, and the manner of serving it.  
 8 This message delivers, from the Lord God, to the rebel breed of Israel:  
 9 Will you never have done with insult, race of Israel, having slain folk,  
 that in mind and body circumcision have none, profane my house by  
 10 entering the sanctuary? What avails it, to offer me bread, and fat, and  
 blood, when all the while these foul doings of yours violate my covenant?  
 11 The sacred charge committed to you went for nothing; guardians of my  
 own worship, in my own sanctuary, should be men of your choosing!  
 12 Place the altar may have, though body and mind be both uncircumcised,  
 in the commonwealth of Israel, the Lord says; place in my sanctuary he  
 13 has none. There be Levites that have forsaken the following of me, when  
 all the race of Israel was: a-straying; that have broken themselves so-  
 14 like gods, and many gods do homage for their flesh. What forbids they  
 should be carriers and door-keepers of mine, temple assistants to pre-  
 15 pare burnt-sacrifice, slay victims, and stand ministering in the people's  
 16 presence? Ministers of false worship, that betrayed Israel into guilt, they  
 17 have made me their own enemy, and must be held to account for it;  
 18 none may they come before me as priests, never touch consecrated gift

that is set apart for holy use; disgraced they must needs be, penance must needs bear; yet I would have them keep the doors of my house, as and be charged with all the ritual affairs that belong to it.

The priests, the true Levites, shall be those sons of Seduc that hold in fast by my people's worship when Israel left the following of me. Theirs to come forward as my ministers; theirs to wait upon my presence, offering me fat and blood of victims, the Lord God says; theirs my sanctuary to be as mine, my table to approach, servants of mine that shall keep the charge I gave them. Come they within the inner gate, they shall be all veiled or in linen; nothing of wool shall clothe them, when they serve me in the holiness of the inner court; girdles of linen on their loins, breeches of a linen about their loins, with no such habiting as may bring them out in a sweat. Their vestments of efler they must lay aside, and put away in the a temple society, when they go out to mingle with the people in the outer court; that holy contact is not for common folk, it is time they put on their workaday clothes instead.

They shall be as pulvis to cut their hair, not grow it long; yet cropped as their heads must not be. As for wine, a priest may not drink it when he is soon to enter the sanctuary. Wed he, it must be a maid he wed, of a lineage truly not selected with or widow, save it be the widow of another priest. Their office it is, to teach the people what is clean and unclean, as what is holy and what profane; when dispute arises, to take their place as at my judgment-seat; and give counsel; my statutes with due rite and ordinance to observe, my tabernacle to keep holy. Never shall they defile as themselves with dead body's contact, save only if be father or mother, son or daughter, brother or unwedded sister of theirs. Cleansed though as be be after such contact, a priest must wait for seven days yet, not enter as the inner court to do service in my sanctuary, the Lord God says, till he has made an offering in atonement for his fault. And for the priestly tribe, it is must have no patrimony assigned to it, I am their patrimony, nor needs be portion, whose portion is his God. Bloodless offering they shall eat, as and the victim that is offered for a fault as a wrong done; theirs every gift as likewise comes to me, theirs the first of all first-fruits, and the residue as of all you offer; and the first bunch of your tithing you must give to the priest, to win his blessing for you and yours. Bird or beast that drops a dead, or has been a wild thing's prey, the priest may not eat.

## CHAPTER 43

WHEN you set about the allotment of your territory, one strip you must leave out, twenty-five thousand cubits by ten thousand,<sup>1</sup> a hallowed strip of land that is to be the Lord's portion, all the length and breadth of it hallowed. (Hallowed entirely one plot in it shall be, a square plot of five hundred cubits each way, with fifty cubits' space for approach all about it.)<sup>2</sup> Within the Lord's domain, a space of twenty-five thousand cubits by ten thousand, surrounding temple and sanctuary, must be measured out – is dedicated to the priests, that serve the sanctuary and worship in the Lord's presence; this shall be their home, this their sacred enclosure. And for the Levites that serve the temple another like space is to be measured out; twenty cubits they shall have there. Marching with the sacred enclosure, there shall be a strip of twenty-five thousand cubits by five thousand, where the common folk of Israel shall have their city and their day's lands. And at either end of the enclosure, and of the city lands, the prince shall have his domain, adjoining either end, and stretching away to west and east as far as each of the adjacent domains reaches westward and eastwards. He shall enjoy his own possessions on Israel's soil; there shall be no more encroaching on the public rights; each tribe shall be given its own territory, to have and to hold.

- Will you never have enough, princes of Israel? the Lord God says. Must it always be wrong and robbery, never right and redress? Right of a king and right of people he bids you determine once for all. Let us have a true scale, a true ephā, a true bath; let ephā and bath match, a tenth part of a cor richer of them; by the standard of the cor they shall be measured. Let twenty ephā go to the side, twice twenty sicles and fifteen besides it go to the mina. And so let there be the things you pay; a sixth of an ephā for every cor of wheat or barley, and a ninth of a bath for every cor of oil, (ninth of bath or hundredth of cor, since the cor is to measure six ephā)<sup>3</sup> and one ram you must contribute out of every two hundred that feed in Israel's pasture-lands. That each may pay his son, for bloodline

<sup>1</sup> *Cubits*! the word is not expressed in the original, and some think that all through this paragraph, except in the last clause of verse 1, the unit of measurement is not the cubit but the *amot*'s rod, the cubit long. We show we know that the temple precincts were five hundred cubits each way (44.16) and they are described as 'five hundred each way' in verse 4 here, it seems best to assume the cubit-measure throughout. The ten thousand; the Septuagint Greek gives twenty thousand, which would include the enclosure of the Levites (verse 3).

<sup>2</sup> Some think this verse has been misplaced, and should come after verse 4.

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew text has probably suffered from corruption in this verse; the Septuagint Greek gives two per cent, not one per cent, as the rest of the old texts. The Latin does not print any acceptable sense.

offering or burnt-sacrifice or welcome-offering, the Lord says, this too is the whole land of Israel owes to its prince. And he, on Israel's behalf, shall defray the cost of burnt-sacrifice, and bloodless offering, and libation, on feast-day and new moon and sabbath, whenever the folk of Israel keep holiday; transgression-victims, and burnt-sacrifice, and welcome-offering, he must provide them all.

On the first day of the year, the Lord God says, the sanctuary must have a calf, without blemish, sacrificed for its purging. Dose-pans of the temple, corners of the altar's base, dose-pans of the inner court, the priest shall smear with blood of the transgression-victims. And the liba must be done again on the seventh day of that month, for faults committed unwittingly, through inadvertence; and so the temple shall be purged clean. On the fifteenth day of the first month you will keep the paschal feast, and for a week eat bread without leaven. On the feast itself, the prince must provide a calf, in atonement for faults of his own, faults of his people; and every day during the week seven calves and seven ewes without blemish, every day, two, a goat for a transgression-victim; with each man or goat a basket of flour, and with each basket of flour a gallon and a half of oil. The same provision he must make, of transgression-victims, burnt-sacrifice, bloodless offering, and oil, for the fifteenth day of the seventh month, and its week of holiday.

## CHAPTER 44

**E**ASTERN gate of the inner court, the Lord God says, must be shut on the six working days, open on the sabbath; on the day of the new moon, too, it shall be opened. When it is opened, the prince shall come in by way of the outer hall, and wait in the entrance till the prince have done presenting burnt-sacrifice of his, welcome-offering of his; there on the threshold he shall do reverence, and go his ways, but the gate shall not be shut after him, not till the evening. On sabbath days, and when the moon is new, before this gate the people also shall do reverence. Six lambs and a ram, without blemish, are the prince's burnt-sacrifice to the Lord every sabbath, with a basket of flour for the ram, and for the lambs what bloodless offering he will; and of oil a gallon and a half to the basket. And when the moon is new, the same victims, and a bullock heaving, unblemished as they; with the bullock, too, a basket goes as bloodless offering, and the rest shall be as before. Through the outer hall of the gateway the prince comes and goes; but on feast-days, when a great throng comes into the Lord's presence, they must enter by one gate and leave by the opposite, from north to south or south to north, and the prince, that watches in their midst, shall enter and leave as they. And

for the bloodless offering, come feast-day, come holiday, it shall be made  
as ascertained. Will the priest make burnt-sacrifice or welcome-offering  
of his own free will, the eastern gate shall be opened for him, as on the  
sabbath, till burnt-sacrifice or welcome-offering is done; but when he  
goes out, the gate shall be shut behind him. And there shall be daily  
burnt-sacrifice; morning by morning he shall offer one of that year's  
lambs, unblemished; of flour, morning by morning, the sixth part of a  
bushel, and half's gallon of oil mingled with it; over this bloodless offering  
is the Lord's due, continual and unblemishable. Lamb and flour and oil,  
morning by morning, as eternal sacrifice.

If the priest will make a gift of land to sons of his, the Lord God says,  
their patrimony it is, held by right of habitation; crown lands he cannot  
alienate to any of his servants beyond the year of jubilee, when they must  
needs return to him; the crown lands are enrolled upon his sons. And at  
no time shall he rob the people by violence of their rightful patrimony;  
if he will endow his sons, out of his own patrimony let him do it; my  
people must not be disinherited.

And now he took me through an entry door by the side of the gate,  
which led to the northern row of priests' rooms round the sanctuary.  
Whence this reached its western end, there was a kitchen, which the  
priests used, he told me, to boil the flesh of victims for a feast or a wrong  
done, to bake the bloodless offering. They must not be carried out into  
the courtyard; such holy contact was not for the people. Afterwards he  
took me into the outer court, round all the corner of it in turn, and  
showed me that there was a little gate in each of them; no corner but had  
its gate; in each, there was a space of forty cubits by thirty, perfectly  
squared. The wall enclosed them, and here, under an open roof,  
kitchens were built. These kitchens, he told me, were used by the temple  
stewards for cooking the welcome-offerings made by the people.

## CHAPTER 47

AND last, he took me to the door of the temple itself, and showed  
me where a stream of water flowed eastwards from beneath the  
threshold of it. Beyond the temple looked, and eastward these waters  
flowed, somewhat to the temple's right, so as to pass by the southern side  
of the altar. Through the northern gate he led me, and round the wall  
that passed the outer gate, taking the eastern way and here, to the right  
of the gate, the water gushed out. Eastward then he faced, the man of  
the measuring-rod; measured a thousand cubits, and led me across a  
stream that reached my ankles. Another thousand, and when I crossed

the stream it reached my knees; another descended, and it was up to my waist, another descended, and now it had become a torrent I might not cross any longer, so high the waters had swelled, out of my depth. Mark it well, son of man, said he; and with that he brought me out on to the bank again; when I reached it, I found that there were trees growing thick on either bank.

This stream, he told me, must flow eastward to the sand-dunes, and so fall into the desert; pass into the Dead Sea and beyond it, cleansing those waters by its passage. Whosoever it flows, there shall be thriving life once again in the Dead Sea, itself there will be shoals of fish, once this stream has reached it, this stream that heals all things and makes all things live. Fisher-folk will line the shores of it, and there will be drying of nets all the way from Bosphor to Engadin, and fish there will be in great shoals, varied in kind as the ocean fish are. Only the stumps and stinkies along it there is no decaying, these shall turn into salt-piles. And on either bank of the stream fruit-trees shall grow of every kind; never leaf lost, never fruit rare; month after month they shall yield a fresh crop, watered by that sacramental stream; fruit for man's eating, and medicinal leaves.

This message, too, the Lord God has for you, about the frontiers of the territory you are to divide among the twelve tribes; twelve, because Joseph must have a double portion. I promised it to your fathers long ago. This land, I told them, shall be allotted to you.<sup>1</sup> And you must allot it among yourselves in equal shares. These are to be its boundaries on the north, from Hethalon, on the Great Sea, across the pass which leads to Sidonia and Emath, by Beeroth and Sathazin (where Emath meets with Syria) and Hamar Tadmor (near the Hamaa country) to the Syrian frontier-town of Hamar Eshan, its extreme limit inland. Ever northward it stretches, this northern frontier of yours, till it reaches Emath. The eastern border is to be drawn between Hamath and what is now Syria, between Galad and Israel proper, down the line of the Jordan to the Dead Sea. Towards the north and the noon-day sun, the line stretches from Thamar to the Waters of Challenge at Cadiz, then follows the Brook of Egypt to the sea, and on the west, it runs straight from the Egyptian border to the Emath pass.<sup>2</sup> All this territory must be apportioned between the tribes of Israel; then you will divide it up among us

<sup>1</sup> The quotation is from Num. 34 in the middle-corner of this chapter is the distribution of Canaan between the tribes in the first instance.

<sup>2</sup> *loc. cit.* 39-40. The text here is obscure, and perhaps partly corrupt; several of the place-names remain unidentified. What seems clear is that the length of the new kingdom (from north to south) is that of David's Kingdom, including Syria ('Damascus' in the original) but not Emath on the north or Hamath on the east; the breadth of it is carefully described, the whole of Transjordan being abandoned.

possessions, Aliens will have their share in it, each alien as have thrown  
 in their lot with you and lived amongst you; neither foreigners you shall  
 count them, and also their children in this tribe as they. Amongst  
 the tribe which has given him shelter, each shall find a home, the Lord  
 God says.

## CHAPTER 48

AND here is a list of the tribal domains. First Dan, with its neighbors  
 a frontier on a line from Hirkadan, across the Euphrat pass, to the  
 Syrian frontier-ways of Hamat Sam, and marching with breadth all the  
 way; its eastern limit . . . the sea.<sup>1</sup> Next, stretching from Issachar's eastern  
 frontier to the sea, Aser, next, in like manner, Nephthali; next, in like  
 manner, Manasse; next, in like manner, Ephraim; next, in like manner,  
 Reuben; next, in like manner, Judah.

Next, in like manner, comes the strip of dedicated land you are to set  
 apart in breadth, twenty-five thousand cubits, in length, stretching from  
 Israel's frontier to the sea like the sea; and in the heart of it, the sanc-  
 tuary. The Lord's own domain will be twenty-five thousand cubits by  
 ten thousand; and in this holy plot, measuring twenty-five thousand  
 cubits north and south, ten thousand cubits east and west, the priests are  
 to dwell, with the sanctuary in their midst. Priests, I say, of Sadoe's  
 line, that held fast by my observances and never went straggling with  
 scraped Israel, as the other Levites did, first-fruits of the first-fruits their  
 domain shall be, the domain of the Levites marching with it. This  
 neighbouring strip will be of the same size, twenty-five thousand cubits  
 by ten thousand; well their land they may use, nor exchange it; the over-  
 seaward ground is unalienable. The remaining strip of five thousand  
 cubits' breadth shall be for the city's buildings and city's lands; the city  
 half-enclosed in the middle; north, south, east and west it shall measure  
 four thousand five hundred cubits: north, south, east and west it shall  
 have pavements two hundred and fifty cubits deep. In length, it will fall  
 short of the Lord's domain by ten thousand cubits on the east, and as  
 much on the west; but this remaining space will be city lands, like the  
 sanctuary lands, growing food for the needs of labouring men in the city;  
 these shall have the right to cultivate it, come they from what tribe they  
 as will. All the length and breadth of this square of territory, twenty-five  
 thousand cubits either way, shall be sanctuary enclosure and city lands;  
 beyond this square of sanctuary and city, all that is left of the dedicated

<sup>1</sup> It seems probable that the original text ran, 'To eastern limit the eastern  
 limit of Issachar, to western limit the sea.'



domains, northwards to the Jordan and westwards to the sea, shall belong to the prince; the half-wind plot that southwards the people shall divide his lands in two. Royal lands and Levite lands shall march with Juda, as royal lands and city lands with Benjamin.<sup>1</sup>

For the rest of the tribes, Benjamin comes first, stretching from Israel's 21 frontier on the east to the sea on the west; next, in like manner, Simeon; 22 next, in like manner, Issachar; next, in like manner, Zabulon; next, in 23 like manner, Gad. Gad shall be the south-westmost, facing the near-day 24 sun, with a frontier running from Thamar to the Waters of Challenge at Cadis, and along the Brook<sup>2</sup> to the Great Sea. Such shall be the territory allotted to Israel's tribes, the Lord God says, and thus abundant they shall be.

And these are the city's limits; on the north side, measure four thousand five hundred cubits; and here (for all must be named after Israel's 25 tribes) are three gates named after Ruben, Issachar and Levi. As many on 26 the east, and here are gates named after Joseph, Benjamin, and Dan. As 27 many on the south, and here are gates named after Simeon, Issachar and Zabulon. As many on the west, and here are gates named after Gad, 28 Aser and Naphtali. The whole circumference is one of eighteen thousand cubits. **THE LORD IS THERE**; such is the name by which the city will be known ever after.

<sup>1</sup> The order of the words in this verse implies, what is not clearly stated elsewhere, that the Levite domain was on the south of the walled enclosure, the city lands on the north of it.

<sup>2</sup> As in 35, 19 the Latin version has adopted the word 'brook' as 'portion'.

## THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL

### CHAPTER I

1 **W**HEN Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, marched against Jerusalem  
2 and laid siege to it, in Josiah's third year as king of Judah, the Lord  
gave him the mastery. Not only Josiah fell into his hands, but . . . some of  
the temple treasures,<sup>1</sup> which he carried off to Babel as offerings to his own  
god, and these, in the treasure house of his own god's temple, bestowed  
3 them. Meanwhile, he had a command for Asphenes, his head chamber-  
lain. He was to take under his charge certain young Israelites, of royal or  
4 princely stock, in body well formed, handsome of count, so well turned  
and grounded, so keen of wit, as they might be taught literature and language  
5 of the Chaldeans, and have places at his court. For three years they should  
have daily allowance of the king's meat and wine; then he would send for  
them.

6 Among these were four tribesmen of Judah, called Daniel, Hananiah,  
7 Mishael and Azarias; the chamberlain had given them fresh names, Bal-  
8 tazar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abdenago. Daniel had resolved, neither meat  
nor wine from the royal table should sully his lips; and for this abstinence  
9 he hoped to get leave from the head chamberlain, with such freedom and  
10 play God had touched his heart. But this would not serve; Nigs, said he,  
what of the change my lord king gives me, that you should have food and  
drink? It were as much as my life is worth, if he saw you haggard-cheeked  
11 beside others of your own age. Hereupon Daniel went to Malshan, one of  
the other chamberlains, to whose care Asphenes had entrusted all four  
12 of them.<sup>2</sup> So, said he, be pleased to put us on our trial. For ten days, give  
13 us nothing but pulse to eat, water to drink, then compare our looks with  
the looks of those others who have fed on the king's bounty; judge by what  
14 they merit, and do with us what they will. The challenge was accepted,  
15 and the ten days' trial began; when it was over, never a one of the king's

<sup>1</sup> The capture of Jerusalem in Josiah's reign is recorded for by II Chr. 35:8, the corresponding passage in IV Kg. 23:1 is perhaps defective. The dating here gives rise to difficulties: Nebuchadnezzar had not yet ascended to the throne in the third year of Josiah (Jer. 39:1). Some think he is called 'king' although still under primary vassalage, that the 'siege' of Josiah is only dated from his death against Babylon, his position up to that time having been merely that of a viceroy.

<sup>2</sup> It seems probable, from what follows, that there has been an omission, and that the original text contained some account of persons (including Daniel and his companions) being removed to Babylon.

<sup>3</sup> The Septuagint Greek seems to preserve a different account of this incident, in which Malshan disappears from the story and it is Asphenes, after all, who grants Daniel's request.

prisoners showed healthy and well nourished as they. After this, Belshazzar had their allowance of meat and wine, and they praise.

Meanwhile, in all laws and learning, God made apt pupils of these four; it was of wisdom and dreams especially Daniel was master. And soon, the 12 days of their probation over, Belshazzar presented his pupils before Nabuchodonosor, who had speech with all of them; and no match was found in the Daniel, Azarias, Michael and Ananias; all must have place at court. Never a question the king could propound, to make trial of their learning; and these quick wits, but they could answer it ten times better than any diviner or sage in his kingdom. And still, up to the beginning of Cyrus' reign, Daniel was . . .

## CHAPTER 2

**I**N the second year of his reign,<sup>1</sup> Nabuchodonosor had a dream; and his mind, between sleep and waking, was all discomfit.<sup>2</sup> Thirteen and a half, a eunuch and astrologer must be summoned without more ado, to present on the royal dream; and when they were admitted to his presence, he said to them, I have had a dream, but my mind is so discomfit, I cannot tell what it was. And the astrologer gave him answer.

### 13 ANANIAS<sup>3</sup>

Long life to the king's grace! Be pleased to tell us what the dream was, and it shall be interpreted. Why, said the king, I know no more than this;

<sup>1</sup> It seems probable that a few words have dropped out at the end of the chapter, telling us that Daniel was 'in high favour' or something of the kind. The phrase 'Daniel was with the first year of Cyrus' is quite without parallel in the Old Testament. Hence, by a slight change in the text, would read 'Daniel was with the king' Daniel was still alive in the third year of Cyrus (521 B.C.).

<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to see how Nabuchodonosor should still have been in the second year of his reign, when Daniel and the others had already undergone three years of training. The difficulty disappears if we suppose that he was only eleven years when he married in Jerusalem (see note on 1.1). But some think that the years are computed in two different ways, chapter 1 reckoning from the day of the king's accession and chapter 2 from the beginning of his first complete year.

<sup>3</sup> 'Between sleep and waking, was all discomfit', literally, in the Hebrew text, 'his spirit was troubled', and he sleep with peace upon him' (which is explained as meaning, 'was all over his mind'). The Septuagint Greek has, 'his sleep was away from him'; the Latin version, 'his dream fled from him.' This Latin perhaps implies that Nabuchodonosor had really forgotten his dream; but this is unnecessary to the story.

<sup>4</sup> It is, of course, possible to render, 'And the astrologer gave him his answer in Aramaic,' but no plausible reason has been suggested for this sudden philological digression. Meanwhile, it is certain that, from this point up to the end of chapter 4, the text given in the Hebrew Bible is not written in Hebrew properly so called, but in the dialect called Aramaic (also used in 1 Maccabees, hence it occurs

dream, and interpretation both you must needs tell me, or else your lives must be forfeit, and your houses put to public use. Gifts and great honour shall be your reward, if you will but tell me forth. Come now, what dream is it, and what meaneth my dream?

1 Once again they scorned; would the king be pleased to recount his  
2 dream to them, interpreted it should be forthwith. Hey, said the king, I  
3 see how it is, you are trying shills with me. You know well there is but  
4 one way to it; dream of mine or dream of yours it must be. Some lying  
5 story you have ready, that will suit your case; how shall I know your inter-  
6 pretation is right, if you cannot tell me what dream I saw? Hey, said they,  
7 never a man on earth could do what the king's grace asks. Princes and  
8 great rulers there have been a many, but none of them yet, those divines,  
9 sage or astrologer, expected as oracles. Here is mischief indeed; these wouldst  
10 have us read for thee, lord king; when is any sinner able to tell thee the  
11 secret? Unless it were the gods only, and they walk not with men.

12 At this, the king was in such a taking of fury that he would have all the  
13 wise men of Babylon put to death; and, once the warrant was out for the  
14 extinction of them, there was loud cry against Daniel and his fellows.  
15 Antioch it was, the captain of the king's guard, that was commissioned to  
16 slay Babylon of all its wise men, and thence him Daniel would have the why  
17 and wherefore of it; here was cruel wrath committed to him; what moved  
18 the king's grace to be so absolute? And, when Antioch had made all clear to  
19 him, into the king's presence he went, asking for more time to answer the  
20 royal question. So, returning to his fellows, Azarias, Mikael and Arias,  
21 he made all known to them, and would have them cry out upon the God  
22 of heaven for better knowledge of his secret, without which both he and  
23 they should perish in the general massacre of the wise men.

24 Then, in the night, the secret was revealed to Daniel, and he fell on  
25 praising the God of heaven, with such words as these blessed be the  
26 Lord's name from the beginning to the end of time; his are the wisdom  
27 and the power; change and chance of our mortal life he rules, opens our  
28 eyes and discerns another. Wisdom of the wise, skill of the skilful, what  
29 is they but his gift? The hidden depths he can lay bare, and the secrets  
30 of the dark does our light dwell with him? God of our fathers, I give thee  
31 thanks and praise for thus assisting, thus enlightening me; for prayer  
32 answered, doubt resolved, and the king's thought revealed.

33 With that, he besought himself to Antioch, that was to slay the wise men,  
34 and made suit to him, say the wise men be should not. There hast but to

likely that the two words given above in capitals are nearly a verse inserted to meet the reader. The most probable account of this circumstance is that two verses of the original text were omitted, one between and one between, and that article chapters which were lost is not had to be supplied from the others.

who me know the king's passion, said he, and the riddle shall be read. Without more ado, Arloch granted his request; here was an exile from *10* Judah, he said, that would answer the royal question. Is this true? the king is asked of Daniel. Canst thou, Belshazzar, tell me the dream and its meaning *15* seek? And Daniel spoke out in the royal presence. Never wisdom or sage, or clever diviner or prophet, that can give the king's grace an answer! For there is a God in heaven, King Nabuchodonosor, that makes hidden things plain; he it is that has won thee warning of what must befall long hence. Let me tell thee what thy dream was, what visions disturbed thy sleep. As *20* thou wast lying there dead, my lord king, thy thoughts still turned on those things, and he that makes hidden things plain revealed to thee what the pattern of those things should be. If the secret was disclosed to me so clear, it is now that I have wisdom beyond the wear of living men; I was but the instrument by which the meaning of it was to be made known, and a king's thoughts uncontrolled.

A vision thou hast of a great image; what height, what splendour, how *25* terrible an aspect it was that confronted thee! Of fine gold the head, of brass and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass; of iron the legs, and so of the feet, too, part was iron, part was but rushbare. And as thou wert *30* watching it, from the mountain-side fell a stone no hands had quarried, dashed against the feet of yonder image, part iron, part clay, and shattered down. With that, down came iron and clay, down came brass and silver *35* and gold; dust of the dashing-fall was cover to scattered on the square floor. They were gone, none knew whither; and stone that had shattered image grew into a high mountain, filling the whole earth.

So much for the dream, and now we that know the secret of it<sup>1</sup> will tell *40* the king's grace what it means. There hath kings for thy vanity, royalty, or power, dominion and great renown the God of heaven has bestowed on thee; every beast of man and wild beast and flying bird he has given over *45* to thee, all alike he has made subject to thee; the head of gold, who else but thou? Another and a lesser empire must follow thine, one of silver, or then another of brass, still wide as the world; then a fourth, of iron, or breaking down and crushing all before it, as iron has power all-conquering, all-rubbing.<sup>2</sup> But first and soon of the image were part iron, part a *50* clay; this fourth empire will be divided within itself. Foundation of iron

<sup>1</sup> "We that know the secret of it" is the original simply "we." It is to be supposed that Daniel was consulting himself with his three fellow-captives, who had perhaps accompanied him to the court.

<sup>2</sup> Many scholars identify the second empire with a "Median" empire (cf. note on 1:11 below), the third with Persia, and the fourth with Macedonia. Others identify the second with Persia, the third with Macedonia, and the fourth with Rome; the breaking-up of the (now divided) Macedonian empire began with the slaying of Perseus at Pydna, B.C. 168.

- 10 there shall yet be, from which it springs; was enough, in the fact that  
 sword, rather than was mixed with true steel. Yet was true steel mixed  
 with base cast-ironware, unless that this empire shall be in part forty years to-  
 11 beaked, in part brittle. Iron and clay mingled; none of the conquerors shall  
 be adorned with conquests human, none; as well mix clay with iron!<sup>1</sup>  
 12 And while thus empire yet flourish, another empire the God of heaven  
 will bring; less being, never to be destroyed, never to be superseded, con-  
 13 quence of all these others, itself consequenceless. This is that same then  
 never seen ever quarried, that fell from the mountain-side, bringing  
 clay and iron and bronze and all ore and gold to nothing; this was a revela-  
 tion the king's gaze had from the most high God himself of what must  
 come about; true was thy dream, and this, poor dream, the meaning of it.  
 14 With that, king Nabuchadnezzar bowed down face to earth, and made  
 Daniel reverence; ay, he would have sacrifice offered to him, and incense,  
 15 and with these words greeted him: Doubt is none but this God of yours,  
 of all gods is God, of all kings the master; he it is brings luckless things to  
 16 light, or how couldst thou have read the secret? Therefore, he raised  
 Daniel to high rank, and showered riches on him; ruler he should be of  
 all Babylon's provinces, and over all its wise men have the pre-eminence.  
 17 For Daniel made suit to him, and it was Sadrach, Misch and Abdenago  
 that had Babylon under their charge; Daniel himself was the king's coun-  
 cilor still.

# CHAPTER 3

- IT was this king Nabuchadnezzar made a golden image, sixty cubits  
 high and six cubits broad, which he set up on the plain of Dura, in the  
 1 province of Babylon; and word went round to king Nabuchadnezzar's  
 court, summoning all the governors, magistrates, judges, chieftains, rulers,  
 2 prefects and leading men from every part of his dominions, to be present  
 3 at the dedication of the image: king Nabuchadnezzar had set up. So they  
 gathered these, governors, magistrates, judges, chieftains, rulers, nobles  
 in high office, and leading men from every part, for the dedication of

<sup>1</sup> Livius: 'In those events iron mixed with cast-ironware, so they shall mingle themselves with the steel of war, but they shall not return, this with that, but as iron will not mix with clay.' This is usually understood as meaning 'the great dynasties will never be altered with each other by means of royal marriages (the steel of iron), but they will not condescend to keep the peace.' All this is very much out of tune with the allegory, which plainly implies that the fourth empire in its later stage will be composed of a weaker and a stronger element within itself, the two elements not really mixing. We must understand, then, that the conquering power (whatever it may be) will take elements and unity the conquered elements it is dealing with.

king Nebuchadnezzar's image. And, as they stood before the image he had set up, a herald cried loudly to men of all peoples, nations and languages: As soon as you hear the sound of horn, flute, harp, cithers, dulcimer, pipe and other instruments of music, you are to fall down and worship the image of gold which king Nebuchadnezzar has set up. Whoever does not fall down in worship will be thrown, there and then, into the heart of a raging furnace. No sooner, then, did the sound of horn, flute, harp, cithers, dulcimer, pipe and the rest reach the assembly than all of them, whatever their tribes, people or language, fell down in worship of king Nebuchadnezzar's image.

It was then that certain Chaldeans came forward with malicious accusations against the Jews. They wished long life to king Nebuchadnezzar, and said, Lord King, thy command was that all men, at the sound of horn, flute, harp, cithers, dulcimer, pipe and the rest, should fall down and worship the golden image, on pain of being thrown into a raging furnace. And here are certain Jews, entrusted by thee with the affairs of Babylon province, to wit, Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago, who have not the royal command at defiance, and will not reverence thy gods, or worship the golden image thou hast set up. Upon this, Nebuchadnezzar said first to Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago in a transport of rage; and what they were brought, without delay, into his presence, this was the threat king Nebuchadnezzar uttered: So Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago will not reverence my gods, or worship this golden image of mine? Here is your choice, then: either you will fall down and worship this image of mine when the sound of horn, flute, harp, cithers, dulcimer, pipe and the other music reaches you, or that and those you shall be thrown into a raging furnace. You are in my power: what God can deliver you?

Then Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago said to king Nebuchadnezzar: There is no need for any answer of ours to that question; there will see for itself whether the God we worship is able to rescue us from the raging fire, and from thy royal power. But, whether he rescue us or no, be assured, sir king, here are men who do not reverence thy gods, or worship any image of mine. At this, Nebuchadnezzar fell into a rage; his features, as he glared at Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago, were distorted with fury. He would have the furnace heated seven times hotter than its wont; and to save this raging furnace he bade his chosen bodyguard throw Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago with their fire shackles. So they were bound just as they were, in brotherhood and union, three and one, and thrown into the heart of the raging furnace; the king's order admitted no delay. So fiercely was the furnace heated that those who threw them in were burned to death. Meanwhile these three, Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago, fell fire bound into the heart of the fire that raged in it.

And there, in the hottest of the flames, they walked to and fro, singing as

to God their praise, blessing the Lord. There, as he stood in the heart of  
the fire, Achan lifted up his voice, and thus made his prayer: Blessed art  
thou, Lord God of our fathers, concentered and glorious in thy name for  
ever! In all thy dealings with us, thou hast right on thy side; so true to thy  
promises, so unswerving in thy course, so just in thy awards! No punish-  
ment thou hast inflicted upon us, as upon Jeroboam, holy city of our  
fathers, but was deserved for sin of ours, falsehood and justice that  
stroke him on. Sinners we were, that had wronged and forsaken thee, all  
was unkind with us; unheeded thy commandments, we also unheeded, thy  
will unregarded, and with it, our own well-being! Nothing we had not  
deserved, plagues of thy contriving, plagues of thy sending, and at last the  
fiend domination of godless men, of a tyrant that has no equal on earth!  
Thou hast sent us slaves, that have brought disgrace on the livery of thy true  
worship.

For thy own honour, we entreat thee not to abandon us eternally. Do  
not annul thy covenant, and deprive us of thy mercy. Think of Abraham  
that was thy friend, of thy servant Isaac, of Jacob whom thou didst set  
apart for thyself; the men to whom thou didst promise that thou wouldst  
increase their posterity, till it was countless as the stars in heaven, so the  
land by the sea shore. Whereas now, Lord, we are of all nations the most  
impatient; all the world over, men are so humbled for our sins. In these  
days we are without prince or leader or prophet, we have no burnt-sacrifice,  
no victim, no offering for us no incense burnt, no first-fruits can be  
brought into thy presence and win thy favour. But oh, accept us still,  
beasts that are crushed, spirits bowed down by adversity; look kindly on  
the sacrifice we offer thee this day, as it had been burnt-sacrifice of rams  
and bullocks, thousands of fattened lambs; who were trained in thee and  
was disappointed? With all our hearts, now, we choose thy will, we revere  
thee, we long after thy presence, for that democracy, that abundance  
of mercy of thine great we hope is vain? By some wonderful deliverance  
vindicate thy own name; theirs be the vain hope, that would do thy  
servants injury. Forth, that would match themselves with omnipotence  
Greek drive their might; much thou dost in all the world Lord there is  
none, God there is none, glorified as thou.

Meanwhile, their sinners were as jills, naphts and now, pink and  
white must be heaped on the furnace, all the flame rose forty-nine cubits  
above the furnace itself, brooking out and burning such Children as  
stood near it. But an angel of the Lord had gone down into the furnace  
with Achan and his companions; and he drove the flames away from it,  
making a wind blow in the heart of the furnace, like the wind that brings  
the dew. So that these three were unscathed, and the fire brought them  
no pain nor discomfort. Whereupon all of them, as with one mouth,  
began to give praise and glory and blessing to God, there in the furnace,



in these words that follow: Blessed art thou, Lord God of our fathers, is praised above all, renowned above all for ever; blessed is thy holy and glorious name, praised above all, renowned above all for ever. Blessed art thou, whose glory fills thy holy temple, praised above all, renowned above all for ever; blessed art thou, who reignest on thy kingly throne, is praised above all, renowned above all for ever. Blessed art thou, who art as thunders above the cherubim, and parest down into the depths, praised above all, renowned above all for ever. Blessed art thou, high in the vaults of heaven, praised above all, renowned above all for ever.

Then they cried out upon all things the Lord had made, to bless him, is and praise him, and extol his name for ever. Bless the Lord they should, as the Lord's angels; bless him they should, the heavens, and the waters as above the heavens; bless him they should, the Lord's Powers. Bless him as they should, sun and moon, stars of heaven, each drop of rain and mist as thou, and all the winds of God. Bless him they should, fire and heat, as winter cold and summer drought, dew and rime at morning, frost and as the cold air. Bless him they should, ice and snow, day-time and night as time, light and darkness, lightnings and storm-clouds. And earth in its is rain should bless the Lord, praise him, and extol his name for ever. Bless as the Lord they should, mountains and hills, every growing thing that earth is yields, flowing fountains, seas and rivers. Bless him they should, sea as creatures and all life that is born in the waters, all the birds that fly in as houses, wild beasts and tame, and the sons of men. Bless him himself as should, princes of the Lord bless him, servants of the Lord bless him; as bless him they should, spirit and soul of all faithful ones; bless him they as should, deflected and humble hearts. And for Ananias, Azarias and as Misael, well might they bless the Lord, praise him and extol his name for ever; here was the grave spoiled, death robbed of its prey, and over they were kept safe from the furnace, let its flames rage as they would. Give as thanks to the Lord, they cried, the Lord is gracious; his mercy is eternal! Bless the Lord, you that are his worshippers; he is God above all gods; as praise him and give him thanks, whose mercy is eternal.<sup>1</sup>

Then answered our King Nebuchadnezzar, and started to his feet; Tell as now, he said to his courtiers, did we not cast three men into yonder furnace, all closely bound? And when they answered, Yea, just doubt, he said as them what he had seen; have were four men, that bonds were none, walking in and fire in the heart of the fire, and never the worse. And such an aspect he wore, the fourth of them, as it had been a son of God. With as that, close went Nebuchadnezzar to the furnace door, and cried, Come forth, Sidrach, Misack and Abdenago! Servants of the most high God,

<sup>1</sup> Verses 24-30 are found in the Septuagint Greek, but were unknown to the Aramaic text; it seems, even in the case of St Jerome.

come out to me! So out came Shadrach, Meshach and Abdenago, from the  
 11 the king's heart all of them; and with one accord governors and judges and coun-  
 ciller-clerical round them to look. Plain it was, the king had no power over  
 them, never a hair singed, not a coat scorched, not any smell of burning  
 12 marked its passage. And at that, Nabuchodonosor could contain himself  
 no longer; blushed he this God whom Shadrach, Meshach and Abdenago  
 worshiped? Have were servants of his that trusted in him, and defied a king's  
 edict, ready to put their lives in peril, so they might be free men, worship-  
 13 ing no God but their own; and he has sent an angel to deliver them.  
 14 Haste, then, I count that if anyone blasphemes against the God of Shi-  
 rach, Meshach and Abdenago, come he of what people, what tribe, what  
 race he may, he shall pay for it with his life, and his bones be put to public  
 15 use. God there is no other than can grant such deliverance as this! And  
 he saw he promoted them to high rank in Babylonian service.  
 16 King Nabuchodonosor to own of every race, tribe and tongue, dwell  
 17 they where they will, all kinds! Have he wondrous powers the great high  
 18 God has been manifesting, and in my power. And my will is to make  
 them known, powers most wondrous, wonders most compelling; such a  
 reign as his lasts for ever, such power as his the ages cannot dimish.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER 4

1 **A**Ll went well in my household, never was Nabuchodonosor's wrath  
 2 against flourishing. And then I had a dream that put me in fear; nor  
 3 waking thoughts gave my troubled wits repose. Thereupon I gave orders  
 4 that all the wise men of Babylon should appear before me, to interpret my  
 5 dreams: diviners and soothsayers, astrologers and soothsayers, all must assemble,  
 6 but none one of them could tell me the meaning of it. At last came Daniel,  
 7 one of their number, uplifted after my own god's name Belshazzar, and en-  
 8 dowed by all the holy gods<sup>2</sup> with their spirit. To him I exhibited my dream  
 9 thus: *Déjeuner is done, Belshazzar, such as thou art; the spirit of all the holy*  
 10 *gods is in thee, and there is no mystery beyond the ken. Tell me, then,*  
 11 *what vision came to me in sleep, what dream is boded.*  
 12 *Wouldst thou know, what Belshazzar described my fear, this was what I*  
 13 *saw. Grew a tree from the heart of earth, beyond measure tall; a great*  
 14 *tree and a sharding; top of it reached the heavens, and the ends of the earth*  
 15 *had view of it. What fair leaves it had, what fulness of fruit, enough to*  
 16 *cover by a whole world! Fruit was none but might make clothes ready to,*

<sup>1</sup> These phrases should (and in some Greek manuscripts do) form part of the next chapter.

<sup>2</sup> Or perhaps 'by the holy God'; so also in verses 4 and 15.

bird was none but might rest in its branches, and to all living creatures  
it gave food. But as I lay watching in my dream, came down from heaven 10  
one of the holy ones that govern guard there, and loud rang his message:  
Down with your tree, top branch, strip leaves, spill fruit! Let beast its  
shade, bird its covert forsake! Yet leave the stock of it first in mark. 11

Band of iron, chain of bronze! There as the soft meadow grass heaven's  
dew wet lies, pasture with the beasts that lay; heart of man be changed 12  
in him, beast's heart given him, till seven seasons there have found him,  
and passed him by. Down it is of the unsleeping one, will and word of  
the holy ones that govern guard that he, the most High, of human king- 13  
ship is revealed, give it to whom he will, and both come too late for the  
hasting of it.

Thus dreamt I, the great king Nabuchodonosor. Make haste, Belshazzar, 14  
and read me the riddle: Wise man was none in my kingdom that could tell  
me the meaning of it, but thou hast the spirit of the holy gods in thee:  
does come unawed it.

But Daniel, Belshazzar if you will, make us answer. For a while here, in  
silence, he gave himself up to his thoughts, and right comfortable they were. 15  
Nay, Belshazzar, the king said at last, gazeless least ever a dream, and the  
interpretation of a dream! Lord king, said he, such dreams be for thy cro-  
nment! To dwellers of thine both they what they bode! A tree tall and 16  
sturdy, top reaching the heavens, in all the world's view, fair branches,  
a fruit abundant, food for all, beams shadowing, birds nesting there, what 17  
is it, lord king, but thou? So great thy power has grown, it reaches heaven;  
earth's bounds are the bounds of thy dominion. He watches even, that  
to help one thou comest coming down from heaven; and his word was, Down  
with the tree, away with it, yet leave the stock of it rooted fast! Of iron  
band be spoken, and chain of brass; of soft meadow grass under the dew  
of heaven, of one that should have his pasture among the beasts, till seven 18  
seasons had found him there, and passed him by. Sentence from the most  
High this dream foretodes, and the king's grace the subject of it. Far from 19  
is the houses of men else shall be driven out, and among brute beasts there  
shall have thy dwelling; eat grass, of-fashion, and with heaven's dew be  
drenched, till seven seasons have passed that by; so learn thou more, that  
of all human kingship the most High is lorded, and governs it whom he  
will. If stock of tree is to be left rooted, he sure thy throne shall be thine 20  
once again; but first thou must leave thy house, that all power is from  
above. Digna, my lord king, to be advised by me; with almsgiving, with  
money to the poor, for first and wrong-doing of thine must needs; it  
may be he will release thy guilt.

All this king Nabuchodonosor underwent. A twelvemonth later, as he  
walked to and fro on the roof of his palace at Babylon, he said aloud to  
Babylon lies before me, the great city, the royal city I have built; sure

- 19 proof of my power, his management of my reserves! And before the words  
 had died on his lips, came a voice from heaven: King Nebuchadnezzar,  
 here is thy doom! Pass away from thee its mass, thy royal power of thine;  
 driven from the haunts of men, with beasts dwell thou, grass like the  
 stalks eat thou, till seven seasons have passed thee by, and learned thou  
 hast that the most High is overlord of all human highship, to grant it  
 20 where he will. These and their fell the doom on Nebuchadnezzar, thrust  
 him out they did, to feed on grass, and over the den of beasts descended  
 him; thick as eagle's feathers his hair grew, and like birds' voices his calls.  
 21 When the appointed time was over, I lifted up my eyes to heaven, I,  
 Nebuchadnezzar, and right reason came back to me. Blessed I then the  
 most high God, to the eternal give glory and praise; such a reign as his  
 22 lasts for ever, such power as his the ages cannot diminish. Matched with  
 him, the whole world of men craves for nothing; in the heavenly powers,  
 as in our mortal lives, he accomplishes his will, and none may resist him,  
 23 none may ask his meaning. And when reason came back to me, back came  
 royal pomp and state, back came the beauty I once had, pride and stature  
 raised on me, restored to my throne now in more magnificence than ever.  
 24 What wonder if I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise this King of heaven, call and  
 glorify him, as faithful to his promise, as just in his dealings? Praise which  
 you can share as he.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER 3

- NOW turn we to king Belshazzar, that made great cheer for countries of  
 his a thousand, each man delighting wine as his mark entitled him.<sup>2</sup>  
 2 And he, in his cups, would have the spoils of the old temple at Jerusalem  
 brought in, cups of gold, cups of silver that his father Nebuchadnezzar  
 had carried away; king and court, with and concubines should drink from  
 3 them. Brought in they were, all the spoils of Jerusalem; king and courtiers,  
 4 wife and concubines, drank from those vessels; drank, and to their own  
 gods gave the praise, gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and  
 stone.  
 5 Then, in that hour, an apparition came to them. They saw the flames

<sup>1</sup> It would seem that the story of Nebuchadnezzar's dream must have been current, from quite early times, in more than one version. The alternative, in this chapter as it stands, between history and autobiography would by itself suggest a compilation from sources. But it is also observable that the Septuagint Greek, while agreeing as to the facts, tells the story throughout in quite different words.

<sup>2</sup> In the Aramaic text, 'and (the king) drank wine in the presence of all the thousand.'

of a man's hand writing on the plaster of the palace wall, fell in the lamp's light; joints of a hand that wrote there the king could not choose but see. All at once he changed colour, a peep to anxious thought; mused his heart within him, and his knees knocked together. With a loud cry, he bade them summon the wise men of Babylon, sage and astrologer and diviner; and to these he made proclamation: Who reads me yonder writing, and tells me the meaning of it, shall go clad in purple, a gold chain about his neck, and hold the third place in my kingdom. But when they came into the banqueting-hall, never a wise head among them could read the characters, nor tell the king what they meant; whereupon king Belshazzar was in a great taking of fear, his cheeks paler yet, and his joints were on easier in mind than himself.

But now all this ado brought the queen-mother down into the banqueting-hall; Longlight to the king's great cried she; here is no need for haunted hearts and pale looks! One man thou hast in thy realm the better gods have placed in thy father's time, good proof he gave of the wisdom and learning that were his. Did not thy father, king Nabuchodonosor, put him at the head of his wise men one and all, sage nor wizard nor astrologer nor sooth-sayer to teach him? In such reason thy royal father held him, my lord king: no constant spirit is his, no constant practice and discernment, no dreams or interprets, hidden things to reveal, secrets to unfold. For his name, it is Daniel; thy father called him Belshazzar. Let Daniel be summoned, and thy riddle shall not long go unmet.

So Daniel was brought into the king's presence, and the king asked him if Daniel he were, one of the Jewish called his father had brought to Babylon? Great things were told of him; that he had the spirit of the gods, gave a proof of skill, discernment and wisdom above the common. And here was a certain writing, that had baffled sage and diviner called in to read them; meaning of it they could not tell. If Daniel had skill indeed to reveal mysteries and untold secrets, let him read those characters and interpret them: robes of purple he should have, and a gold chain about his neck, and hold the third place in the kingdom.

But Daniel spoke out, there in the king's presence: Purple and gold is keep for thyself, and the thy honour, for him have them who will. But for the writing, I will read it willingly, and tell thee the meaning of it. Sir is king, thy father was Nabuchodonosor to him the most High gave royal state, and splendid revenues; for that reason of this, every people and race of men with many troubles he sent of him; then he, smote he, ruled he, shamed he, all he would. With that, his heart beat high; proud grew his will and obstinacy and the hour of it? From that throne he never came down, to share of that glory; cut out henceforth from the books of men. How of lower the hour of him dwelling-place of wild men should be his, food of the ox; and the dew of heaven should drench him, till he had

- learned that the most High is overlord of all human biography, grants it to  
 10 whom he will. All this, Belshazzar, thou knowest, yet thou art more than  
 11 father would share his pride; heaven's Ruler defying, thou wouldst bring  
 out yonder cups, the spoil of his temple, to serve wine for thee and thy  
 12 court, for wine and concubines. Gods of silver and gold, brass and iron,  
 stone and wood, that cannot see or hear or feel, thou wouldst magnify  
 13 for the God that holds thy life, thy fortunes, in his keeping, serves a sword  
 14 of praise. That is why the hand appeared to thee, signs that were what  
 15 those records written. This is the character of it: Mene, Theroi, Phares.  
 16 Mene! terrible numbering; to many years allowed to thy empire, and now  
 17 God has brought them to an end. And Theroi, weighing: the equat of his  
 18 benefits God demands, and has not found in thee. And Phares, reading:  
 19 Purshu and Mide shall be thy successors in the kingdom that is won from  
 the grasp.  
 20 With that, at the royal bidding, they clothed Daniel in purple, and bring  
 a chain of gold about his neck; proclamation, too, was made that he hold  
 21 the third place in the kingdom. For that same night Belshazzar, the Chal-  
 22 dean king, was slain, and his crown passed to Darius, a Mede, then in  
 the sixty-third year of his age.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER 6

- THIS Darius saw fit to appoint a hundred and twenty lords lieutenant,  
 1 who should govern the provinces of his empire; and over these, three  
 2 stewards, of whom Daniel was one; governors should be accessible to rice-  
 3 roy, and the king take no part. Yet presently was come an edict that  
 4 could compare with Daniel, as surely God inspired him; and soon the  
 king's thought was, to put the whole empire under his care. Right gladly  
 would his rivals have found opportunity to discredit him in the king's  
 5 eyes; but no, hostile or potent they could find none, so faithful was he, so  
 6 the reserved drew all kinds of suspicion. And at last they were fain to  
 submit, if charge was to be found against Daniel at all, keeping of his God's  
 law must be the ground of it.

- 7 So they took the king by surprise, Long life, they said, to the king's  
 8 grace! Here is a design upon which we are all agreed, victory and magni-  
 tude and governor and senator and judge; that no other should go on:

<sup>1</sup> If the event here referred to is the well-known capture of Babylon by Cyrus, Darius the Mede should perhaps be identified with Gobares, a general of his who took command of the city after its capture. It is not impossible that a short-lived 'Median' empire may have intervened between that of Babylon and that of Persia, but the circumstances would be ones of its own the second empire appear to regard the Medes and Persians as already the political partners, a single nation.

writes the royal seal forbidding thy subjects to make any request of god or man these next thirty days, save only of myself. And if any man disobey, it shall be on pain of his life, he is for the lion-pit. May it please the king's grace to give this decree of our effect, and make the decree agreeable, under law of the Medes and Persians, the law there is no annulling.

Drove up the edict he did, and signed it. As for Daniel, when he heard it was law, he took himself lower; and now as ever, three times a day, he would open his chamber window towards Jerusalem upwards, doing reverence on bended knee and praising his God. He saw they surprised a lion at it, three minutes of his found him a-praying to his God, and went to him to scold the king of his edict. Had not a law been enacted, prayer shall be once to god or man these thirty days following, save to the king; and that on pain of the lion? Law is it, said he, and there of the Medes and Persians there is no annulling. Why then, they asked the king, what is of Daniel, Daniel the Jewish calls, that for law and edict cares nothing? Three times a day he offers his God prayer.

Faithful hawking was this for the king's ear, so now Daniel was of his thought, and so that could be laboured till set of sun: but the trap they had so devised was too crafty for him, and ever they put him in mind there was no help for it. By the law Medes and Persians was, let the king once make a decree, there is no annulling it. At last the king gave orders Daniel is should be sent for and shut up in the lion-pit. So faithful a servant, he told him, thy God must needs deliver. And with that, a room was brought and set down at the pit's entrance, which the king sealed and his soldiers betwix once might tamper with it. House went the king, and supperless to bed, as he would have no food brought him, and sleep he might not.

With the first light of day, the king was up and stirring; to the lion-pit he hastened, and as he came up to it, he cried out most lamentably: O Daniel, servant of the God that lives, has faithful service of thee availed thee, rescued thee from the lion? Long life to the king's grace, Daniel answered: angel of his did his command, and stopped the lions' mouths. O What harm should they do me, now that my God was guiltless? And for thyself, lord king, wouldst thou I to save thy displeasure. Right glad the king was to learn of Daniel's safety; he sent he gave orders they should bring Daniel up out of the pit, and out of the pit they brought him, stretched themselves to foot, such reward they have that trust in God. Thereupon, at the king's bidding, they fetched his accusers, and thrust them into the lion-pit, their wives and children with them. But those never reached the floor of it, so quickly the lions fell upon them, and broke all the bones of them to nothing.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. note on Mt. 23. The Septuagint Greek text, 'they stretched three two accusers of him; i.e., the two other women alluded to in verse 2 above.

- 15 Then Darius sent out a proclamation to all the world, without distinction  
 16 of nation, race or language, wishing them well, and reminding this  
 decree upon them, that all the subjects of his empire should hold the God  
 of Daniel in awe and reverence. There is a God that lives, he told them, a  
 God that abides for ever; such a reign as his there is no overthrowing,  
 20 such power as his the ages cannot diminish. His to deliver, his to save,  
 his to show wondrous portents in high heavens and on earth beneath, the  
 God who saved Daniel from the lions.  
 25 Let Darius reign, or Cyrus the Persian, this same God will save yet.

## CHAPTER I

**I**N the first year of the Babylonian king Belshazzar, Daniel had a dream;  
 sleep he might, but still his thoughts were busy. The substance of this  
 dream he put on record, giving no more than the sum of it, in these words  
 following.

- 1 Night came, and brought with it a vision for my seeing. All the winds of  
 2 heaven, I thought, did battle over the wide sea, and out of it came first  
 3 great boats, each of them different from the last. A lioner the first seemed,  
 4 that yet had eagle's wings; but as I watched, these wings were plucked,  
 5 and with that it rose up from the ground, standing on its feet like a man,  
 6 and a man's heart was given to it. Then rose up another by its side, this one  
 7 like a bear; three rows of teeth it had in its mouth, and a man's heart was  
 8 in it, great part of mankind it should devour. What now I saw? A leopard it  
 9 seemed, yet had a bird's wings, four of them, on its back, and four heads;  
 10 this beast it was that now marked dominion. But still I dreamed on, and  
 11 a fourth beast saw at last, fiercer, and stronger, and more powerful yet.  
 12 It had great limbs of iron, ready to crush and to devour, and over what  
 13 these spared it would trample down with its feet; much it chose where  
 14 might carry, and out of its head grew ten horns. Even as I watched these,  
 15 a new horn grew up in the midst of the others, and three of them must be  
 16 plucked away to make room for it; eyes it had, this new horn, like a man's  
 17 eyes, and a mouth that talked very boastfully.  
 18 While I still watched, there were judgment-thrones a-setting and one  
 19 took his seat there crowned with age. White as snow his garments were,  
 20 and pure steel could not reach his hair for whiteness; his throne all of  
 flame, the wheels under it glancing fire; and over from his presence a  
 stream of fire came rushing onward. A thousand thousands they were that  
 waited on his bidding, and for every one of these, a thousand others were  
 standing there before him. Justice should be held now, and the records lay  
 25 open. And still I watched, to see what would become of the beasts, prouder



horn had smitten; and all at once I was aware the beast itself had been slain, and even the corpse of it had vanished, hauled away to the flames; nor might those other beasts enjoy power any longer, though life they should enjoy for a while, until their turn came. Then I saw in my dream, how one came riding on the clouds of heaven, that was yet a son of man; came to where the Judge sat, crowned with age, and was welcomed into his presence. With that, power was given him, and glory, and sovereignty; they gave him all power, men of every race and tribe and tongue; such a reign as his lasts for ever, such power as his the ages cannot diminish.

By this, Daniel wrote, my heart was ill at ease: a dismal sight it was, and as I dreamed, my thoughts bewildered me. So I drew closer to one that stood by, and asked to know the truth of all that had gone forward; he it was that read the visions for me, and thus he unravelled it: It is but earthly kingdoms they broken, these four great beasts thou hast seen; the seventh reign of the most high God shall have dominion yet; thine it shall be for ever and for evermore. But I was minded to know the truth more fully: what was the fourth beast, so different from all the rest, so dreadful; why gave it have such and claws of iron, to crush and to devour, to trample on what was left? What of the ten horns on its head, and that other, before to which three of them fell, the horn that had eyes, and a mouth to boast with, and grow greater than the rest? This he said it was I saw doing battle against the seventh of the most High, and getting the better of them, until the Judge appeared, crowned with age, to give them redress, and their turn came to have dominion.

And his answer was, this fourth beast was the fourth of those earthly kingdoms, and the greatest of them all, to crush and devour and trample down a whole world. Ten kings be the ten horns of that kingdom, and after three another shall rise, more powerful yet, and three of them shall bite the first. Fearfully he shall challenge the most High, and do his worst: wars deepening, calamities and afflictions he shall think to set aside; for a space of time, and for twice as long, and for half as long,\* he will needs have his way. Then wrath shall be kindled on him, and all his power be taken away, crushed down and forgotten for ever. Then what royalty, what empire, what earth-revolving dominion shall be thine, the people set apart for the most High? Sovereignty everlasting; no research but meet how to his glory.<sup>†</sup>

So ended the revelation made to Daniel. Bewildered my thoughts were, and my cheek pale, but I kept the memory of it faithfully in my heart.

\* Literally, 'For a time, and times, and half a time.' This is traditionally interpreted as meaning three-and-a-half, that is, half of the mystical number seven.

† It must be confessed that the historical interpretation of verses 14-17 remains wholly doubtful. It is not even clear whether the four beasts represent four successive empires (like the seven in chapter 2), or four kingdoms existing simul-

## CHAPTER 1

TO me, to Daniel, another revelation came, besides that I had first seen. It was now the third year of King Belshazzar, and I was at the town of Susa, in Judaea province, but it seemed, in my vision, it was by the gate of Uhal I stood. I looked at what lay before me, and what saw I, at the edge of the marsh, but a man standing there, with very high-browed, long horns, and another that grew up after it, but grew higher yet. With those horns it reared every way that came to meet it; west and north and south was across a beast could watch it, or escape its attack, no wonder this man carried all before it, and rose to greatness.

But now, as I looked, came a third goat from the west country, with cornucubing, and spanning the ground beneath him; one horn this goat had between the eyes of him, a horn of noble aspect. Close he came to the first, the great bearded man I had copied in yonder gateway, and bore down upon it with very furious onslaught. So easily he charged that he overcame the man and broke either horn of it with one blow; what shift could it make now! Brought down it was and trampled under foot; there was no resisting it. So now it was the goat's turn to carry dominion; yet as he came had he reached his full strength, then the great horn was broken, and four other horns must grow up in place of it, fronting the four winds of heaven.

It was from one of these a single horn now sprung; a little horn that grew till it outswitted south and east, eye, and the armies . . . For the angles of heaven itself it proved a match, bringing heavenly power down to earth, man down to earth, and trampling them under foot; a match even for the captains of those armies, that must lose the daily victuals as offered to him, and look on at the destruction of his sanctuary. Alas for our guilt! That such a king, by armed force, should rival against the sacrifice, truth itself should destroy, and should strive yet, should prosper as yet! This complaint I heard one of God's servants making to another, I know not who; and when that other asked how long a cessation of sacrifice the vision portended, how long the outraging guilt, and the defilement and the profanation. Night first, said he, morning after; two thousand three hundred days it will be, ere the sanctuary is cleansed.<sup>1</sup>

anarchy, i.e., the four main divisions of the Macedonian empire after Alexander's death. The little horn is usually identified with Antiochus Epiphanes (d.c. 176-164), the persecutor of the Maccabees, but he was the eighth, not the tenth of his line, and the explanation given of the "three horns" displaced by him seems curiously forced.

<sup>1</sup> According to the Hebrew text, 'his given,' and so in verse 14.

<sup>2</sup> Verses 9-14 (particularly verse 12) are very obscure, and may have suffered

But for me, for Daniel, that saw the vision, understanding of it was to come, till one appeared to me that had the appearance of a man, and a voice hailed him from between Chai gates; For thou it is, Gabriel, to make the vision clear. Come he close, then, to where I was standing; but I, at his coming, fell down in terror, face to earth. Hail thou well, son of man, said he; what have thou seen, in the last days shall be accomplished. But as he spoke to me that lay recumbent on the ground; so he must put out his hand, and raise me to my feet. Then he went on: I mean to tell thee how it all shall fall out when the days of punishment are over; he saw the end of them is hard. Hannu' came of thy vision, rules over the Medes and Persians; he will go over the realm of Ormus, and the great horn between his eyes is that of the Greek kings. Those four others that grew after it, are bearding are four kings that shall arise, fellow-countrymen of his, less not his peers. These reigning, the world shall go from bad to worse, till a man is king, comes to the throne, horned-faced, a master of riddles. Great power is shall he wield, though of that first king are the peers, making havoc beyond belief, stirring and prospering. Strength of arm nor hardness of life shall move peoples from his will; all shall go well with crafty scheming of his, as all his heart grows proud, and he drinks death all about him, when peril is come. And at last with the Prince of princes he shall try conclusions; no longer lived it shall be that crushes him down at last. Night comes first, as dawn morning; but the revelation made to thee is a true one; and it up, till about last days when it must have effect.

So much he told me; and for many days after I lay sick; when I was on my feet again, I had the king's business to do, but still I was all shod by the vision, and there was no interpreting it.

from manuscript corruption. At the end of verse 9, the Septuagint Greek has 'the earth'; the Hebrew text 'the splendour' for 'prosperity', the Greek's the Latin version 'the union.' Perhaps a word has dropped out, and we should read either 'the union of harvest,' as in verse 10, or 'the land of splendour' as in 11.26. The reference to night and morning in verse 12 is generally interpreted, according to the Hebrew text, of the rising and setting of the sun. Some think that we should understand as (about) 1.25 days, involving 2,500 nights.

<sup>1</sup> In verses 13-16, the great horn is evidently Alexander of Macedonia, who died in B.C. 323, and the little horns presumably Antiochus Epiphanes. The Latin version gives two different translations of the same phrase in verses 20 and 24, but it seems likely that we ought to give it uniform interpretation either 'as it exists in the Alexander's strength,' which suits the context best, or 'and by means of their (his) own strength,' which is a more natural rendering of the Hebrew. The description of Antiochus Epiphanes is not particularly recognizable.

## CHAPTER 9

- T**HEN Daniel the Monk, son of Assurim, was called to the throne of Chaldeas; and in the year when his reign began who but I, Daniel, should discover, by the reading of old records, how to compare the seventy years of Jerusalem's widowhood? Such doom the Lord had foretold to the prophet Jeremiah. And with that, I turned to the Lord my God, past to him I would, and rose for prayer, flinging away raiment and arming with my zeal.
- I prayed I then to the Lord my God, and made confession of my sins, in these words following: Mercy, mercy, Lord God, the great, the terrible; to those who love thee, so gracious, with those who keep thy commandments, truth keeping still. Sinned we have, and wronged thee, rebelled we have, and forsaken thee, turned our backs on decree and stood off thine, nor looked thy servants, the prophets, that speak to us in thy name, to king and prince and the common folk that governed us. Fault with thee is ours, ours, Lord, to blush for the wrong-doing that has offended thee, men of Juda, citizens of Jerusalem, Israel near at hand. Israel banished for aye, in what plight thou seest! Blame us, king and prince of ours, fathers of ours that did the wrong; be it thine, O Lord our God, to have us sorry and to forgive. So far we have strayed from thee, so dead to the divine voice, when the prophets that served thee bade us follow thy law!
- A whole people that would transgress thy command, turn a deaf ear to thy call! What wonder if it fall on us, deep by deep, the avenging curse! God's servant Moses wrote off Our sins had deserved it, and if ponder unrepented punishment befell Jerusalem, it was for a threat fulfilled; warning we had of it, we and the princes that governed us. No misfortune overtook us, but the law of Moses had foretold it; and yet, O Lord our God, approve thy anger we would not, nor leave our sinning, nor forbide our selves, how will thy word then keep? what wonder if hate, not blessing, the divine regard brought us? Be our punishment when it will, nor ever to find fault with the God we have disobeyed.
- Thou art the Lord our God, whose commanding power rescued thy people from the hand of Egypt, who hast won thyself glory, too, in this our day; we, Lord, have been unwary, we have shown ourselves unworthy of all thy faithful dealings with us. How wilt thou let thy indignant anger fall on Jerusalem, on that holy mountain of thine? Too long, for our sin and the sin of our fathers before us, all our neighbours have held Jerusalem, and us thy people, in contempt. God of our race, give audience at last to the prayer, the plea thy servant brings before thee; for thy own honour, a ransom the sanctuary that now lies desolate to the smile of thy foes. My

God, give ear and listen to me; open thy eyes, and see how desolate is this city of ours, that chosen to be thy seat. No man is here, nothing but thy great love emboldens us to lay our prayers at thy feet. Thy hearing, Lord, is thy pardon; thy blood, Lord, and thy will! For thy own honour, my God, drag thyself no longer to the city, the people that is called thy name!

Thus prayed I, that did I confess my own sins, and the sin of my fellow Israelites, pouring out supplications, there in the presence of my God, for that holy mountain which is his dwelling place. And I was still at my prayer, when the bright aspect of Gabriel, as I had seen it at the beginning of my vision, flew swiftly to my side; it was the hour of the evening sacrifice when he passed me. And with those words he enlightened me: Daniel, my friend is to instruct thee and give thee discernment. Even as the prayer began, a secret was disclosed, and I am here to make it known to thee, so well heaven loves thee. Mark well, then, the message, and read the revelation aright. It is ordained that this people of thine, that holy city of thine, should wait seventy weeks before guilt is done away, the ended, wrong righted; before God's everlasting favour is restored, and the visions and the prophecies come true, and he who is all holiness receives his anointing. Be assured of this, and mark it well; a period of seven weeks must go by, and another period of sixty-two weeks, between the order to rebuild Jerusalem and the coming of the Christ to be your leader. Seven and well will be built again, though in a time of distress; and then sixty-two weeks must pass before the Christ is done to death; the people will discern him and have none of him. Then the army of an invading leader will destroy both city and sanctuary, so that his taking away will again mean destruction; only a ruin is to be left when that war is ended. High covenant he shall make, before another work is done, and with folk a money; but when that work has run half its course, offering and burnt-sacrifice shall be none; in the temple all shall be defilement and desolation, and until all is over, all is fulfilled, that desolation shall continue.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The prayer of Daniel has several points in common with that of the Jewish people in *Ezra* 8.15, 8.19.

<sup>2</sup> The traditional account given of verses 24-27 is, that Daniel interprets the seventy years of Israel's captivity as seventy weeks of years, and that the periods called 'weeks' are periods of forty-nine years, four hundred and thirty-five years, and seven years respectively, four hundred and thirty in all. The order to rebuild Jerusalem is, quite accurately, identified with that given in *Neh.* 2, and dated c. 445 B.C. This would explain the preoccupation with prophecies about 'the End' which characterizes the thought of our Lord's contemporaries; Daniel's prophecy was to fall due within the course of that century. It must be admitted, however, that widely different views have been held about the application of the prophecy in detail. Modern commentators, who understand the whole passage as a reference to Antiochus Epiphanes, and the profanation of the Temple in B.C. 167, are driven to very unsatisfactory explanations of the three periods

## CHAPTER 10

**T**HEN, in the third year of Cyrus' reign, that was king of Persia, a fresh revelation was made to Daniel, who is also called Belshazzar. Here is truth indubitable, and a great host . . . And right well he understood his meaning: little vision vision where understanding is none.<sup>1</sup>

1 For three weeks together I, Daniel, that saw it, had been making and  
2 there, for three weeks together dry bread was my diet, nor ever did come  
3 to mine eyes any sleep, nor did amuse me. Came now the twenty-fourth  
4 day of the new year, and I stood by the banks of the great river, where it  
5 is called Tigris. I looked up, and saw a man standing there clad all in  
6 linen, and his girdle of fine gold. Clear as topaz his body was, like the  
7 play of lightning shone his face, and like burning coals his eyes; arms  
8 and legs of him had the sheen of bronze, and when he spoke, it was like  
9 the murmur of a shawm. The vision was for me, for Daniel, whom my  
10 companions never saw it, such fear overcame them, they were fain to hide  
11 themselves, and I was left alone with this high vision for my company.  
12 No wonder if my spirits were cowed; pale grew my cheek, and all the  
13 strength in me ebbed away. He spoke, and as I listened to that voice, I  
14 stood where I stood, and lay there, face to earth, till a hand touched  
15 me, giving fresh impulse to knee and wrist.

16 Daniel, he said to me, Daniel, so well beloved, up with thee, and heed  
17 thou well: I have an errand to thee. Yet for all he spoke thus to me, I stood  
18 there trembling, and still he came along my side. Take heart, Daniel, said  
19 he; thy prayers did not go unheard. Prayer of thine it was beckoned me to  
20 thy side, from the very moment when thou didst set about thy search for  
21 knowledge, by fasting in the presence of thy God: but these twenty-one  
22 days he who guards the realm of Persia has delayed my coming. At last  
23 Michael, one of the high lords, brought me aid, and there, at Persia's  
24 court, I was left master of the field.<sup>2</sup> Now I am here to tell thee what shall  
25 befall thy people in the last days, long days must pass ere the revelation is  
26 accomplished.

involved. Verse 17 is very obscure, and the our seems to have suffered in transmission. 'All shall be affliction and desolation' literally, 'There shall be affliction and desolation' of. P. 16. 16. 17.

<sup>1</sup> The attempts made to explain this verse as it stands are not such as to produce conviction, and it seems likely that there is some corruption or omission in the text.

<sup>2</sup> 'He who guards the realm of Persia' the reference here, and all through the rest of the chapter, is to the guardian angel of the country concerned, according to the common opinion. The last clause in this verse is of very doubtful interpretation.

Every, as he spoke, I stood there dumb, and with open downturn, till  
 all at once a truth fell on my lips, like the words of human hand.<sup>1</sup> Now  
 sound I speak, to give you clear witness his answer. Behold then, my  
 lord, I said, that sight of thee restores my former strength in me is none.  
 How should such hardly words with manner? Not strength alone falls me;  
 the very breath will not come. Once again a hand seemed to touch me,  
 and words came to lighten me; My, fears are not for thee, so well be-  
 loved; never harm befall thee! Take courage, and play a man's part With  
 thee, I found my strength again; Speak on, my Lord, said I; thou hast  
 put new heart into me. And he answered, Hast thou read, by this, the  
 secret of my coming to thee? I am even now on my way back to fight  
 against the lord of Persia; when I left him, what saw I but the lord of  
 the Greeks already on the march? Only I must show thee that what is  
 written in the book of doom.<sup>2</sup>

Much is to do, and save for Michael, that is guardian of your race, I  
 have none to aid me.

## CHAPTER 11

HIM to strengthen and uphold has been my task,<sup>3</sup> ever since Darius  
 the Mede began reigning. And now, down to flourish thee, a king  
 shall rise in Persia,<sup>4</sup> the fourth from this, rich in great revenue beyond all  
 the others; in the power such wealth gives him, he will set the whole  
 world in motion against the realm of Greece . . .

And a warrior king shall arise, winning such empire that there is no

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'As it were the semblance of a son of man revealed my face.' This would suggest, at first sight, the presence of a second angelic being, not mentioned, but verse 15 probably implies that only one angel is referred to, from verse 5 onwards.

<sup>2</sup> Verse 20, if so we read naturally, and some think the order of the original text has become disturbed through an scribble. 'The book of doom'; literally, 'the writing of Belshazzar' (i.e., written).

<sup>3</sup> 'Thee' probably refers to Michael; but it might be understood of 'the lord of Greece,' or even of Darius.

<sup>4</sup> This king is ordinarily identified with Xerxes (i.e., 485-465). But it is doubtful whether the Hebrew text should not be rendered 'shall set all in motion, the whole realm of Greece'; and this might describe the persecution offered to Philip of Macedonia by Antiochus III; he might be called the fourth successor of Antiochus I, in whose reign Jerusalem was rebuilt. If the interval (of more than a century) between Xerxes and Alexander has been passed over in silence, it may be a probable shortening of history, or conceivably there has been an omission in the text.

- 1 dividing his will.<sup>1</sup> Divided that empire shall be, as soon as it is established, between the four quarters of heaven; but sons of his they shall be that rule it, nor peers of his, besides these, foreign lords shall put his dominions between them. The southern kingdom a strong ruler shall have, but of his vassals one shall be mightier than he, and in dominion excel him; while, with his domains, 'till at last these two make terms between them, and, to seal their amity, daughter of Egyptian king to Syrian king must pass.<sup>2</sup> Yet shall she away run, nor dynasty of hers endure; herself to die shall, with verities of her, fiction of her, must be a victim. Her sovereignty; woe of her own father's stock shall march on Syria, and the burden, and perils shall carry off to Egypt the images of Syria's gods, its treasures of silver and gold. Then, his rival mastered, with that expedition he shall be content, and to his own kingdom return.
- 10 To Syria's helm the quarrel is left; and now there are great hosts assembling, under a new king that must ever be hurrying on, like river in flood, retaining with spirit to the change, throwing all his forces into the assault. See with what fury the Egyptian king takes the field against him, rallies a great host of his own, and over Syria's host gains the mastery! Captives a many, dead warriors a many, to gladden his heart, but all to no purpose: back Syria comes, in greater force than ever, ranks filled, and treasures swollen, with the years. All the world will be for picking a quarrel with Egypt; strong host-hosts there will be among thy own people who think to fulfil the old prophecies thus, but to their cost. On marches he, yonder Syrian king, rises onward, and makes fortified cities his own; Egypt's vigils are all spent, never a halt, though its best warriors engage him; irrevocable he comes, to impose terms on his enemy, sets foot in a noble land<sup>3</sup> and crushes it under his heel. How to gain secure possession of the white kingdom? A bargain must be struck; gift of a royal bride shall be the land's ransoming! Not so, that will not serve, never shall it be his. To the sea-coast he turns his thoughts instead, and conquers lands a many, puts to silence the voices of his own dragons, and covers him with disgrace in his turn.<sup>4</sup> But at last, to his own portance turning back, he totters to his fall, and the fame of him is heard no more.

<sup>1</sup> In verses 3-10, the period from Alexander the Great to Antiochus the Great is sketched in with considerable detail; verse 11 gives the history of Seleucus, daughter of Ptolemy II, and verse 12 that of Antiochus' daughter Cleopatra.

<sup>2</sup> 'Egyptian' and 'Syrian' are 'southern' and 'northern' in the original, although this chapter (though Egypt is mentioned by name in verses 4, 11, and 12).

<sup>3</sup> The 'noble land' here and in verse 41, is usually understood as meaning Palestine, though Egypt is a possible alternative in either case.

<sup>4</sup> This verse is very obscure, and in the Hebrew text unrecognizable. We could have supposed some reference to the defeat of Antiochus by the Romans at Magonia (c. 190).



To a wife women his throne must pass, of a throne unworthy; soon as shall his end come, and yet no blow struck in anger, or in battle.<sup>1</sup> And as after him a man little thought of, royal treasures he has won, yet see how readily his approach, what shifts he uses to win a throne.<sup>2</sup> Down as go strong armies, crushed before him, down goes crowned chief;<sup>3</sup> weary flee, and then mockery; of armed following he needs but little. As So he makes his way into rich cities that respect no harm, without brother as and grandson both in banish, so much wealth is plundered and so squandered into strong cities, too, by crafty devious, while fortune serves. Power of as his and policy of his he shall match as war against Egypt, with a great army at his back; alas, Egypt, what avails that great number of warriors? Craft wins the day, men that feed on thy royal bounty are thy own as undoing, and with great slaughter that army of thine is overthrown. See as where the two kings plot matched at one table, turn both! But nothing they shall achieve; not yet the appointed hour has come. Each goes the as king of Syria, weakened with spoil, wrecking his spite on God's covenant as he journeys home; then, when the time is ripe, marches once again as southwards. Yet spoil he shall not as once heaped; here are Romans as galleys<sup>4</sup> overtaking him, and he must return discomfited.

And now, as he returns, he shall vent his spleen against the holy covenant in good earnest. The forerunners of that covenant have not escaped his eye, and there are willing hands a many to help him profane the as inalienable sanctuary, daily services ceasing, spreading defilement and desolation there. Fencing houses, and nations to the covenant! But as some others, that their God acknowledge, shall go all the more boldly as to work. Travellers a few that give right counsel to many/Crippled they as shall be for a while, by sword and flame, by prison and plunder; then, as even as they are falling, it will need but a little support, and the little multitude will rally to their side. What if some of them should fall, as those wise counsellors? Assured let them be for a little, sifted, purged for a little; there shall be happier times yet.

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew text describes this king as 'coming as emperor to pass through,' presumably in allusion to II Mac. 2-7. But the Septuagint Greek, like the Latin version, contains no such allusion.

<sup>2</sup> Throughout verses 22-27, the allusions are much less readily traceable than in verses 2-21. Some parts of it at least are generally understood as referring to Antiochus Epiphanes (J.C. 174-164), but for the most part it would be equally applicable to any succeeding ruler.

<sup>3</sup> 'Crowned chief' perhaps means the high priest Onias III, deposed by Antiochus in B.C. 171.

<sup>4</sup> So the Septuagint Greek, but the Hebrew text has simply 'ships of Chobshai.' Cf. also the West. It looks as if the version had interpreted their original. It is well known that Antiochus was wanted off Egyptian soil by the Roman ambassador Publius Lentulus.

- 10 As for the king, he shall have all his own way; in his pride, he will think himself a match for any god, even of that God whom himself the king, who is above all gods, And still he shall desire; vengeance is not  
 11 yet ready to overtake him: soon shall come when dream must. What are his fathers' gods to him? Whom's challenge is all his conceit of gods: he is such a little, that will set himself up over all. When his turn comes, it is the god of Macedonia<sup>1</sup> he will worship; for such a god, that never his  
 12 fathers knew, the gold, and the silver, and the precious jewels, with this new-found god to aid him, he will make Macedonia his stronghold, shower honours and dignities upon his folk, make a present of lands to them.  
 13 Then comes the hour of destiny. Egypt shall declare war, and he, the Syrian king, shall sweep down upon it with hosts and chariot and a great  
 14 fleet. Which lands will he invade and conquer, which pass by, ere he reach the nobles of them all? Balaad a quarry shall be, but Eden shall  
 15 escape his onslaught, and Moab, and the princelings of Ammon. A country here he will assume, a mastery there, and he sure Egypt shall not  
 16 go unscathed: gold and silver of Egypt, and all its precious treasures shall come into his power. Then, as through Libya and Ethiopia he  
 17 makes his way, tidings shall come from east and west, to bring him back  
 18 with all his host, ready for havoc, ready for vengeance. See where he sets up his royal pavilion? behold sea and sea on yonder side hill, yonder sacred hill; reaches its very summit, and none belongs still<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER 12

- TIME, then, that Michael should be up and doing. Michael, the high  
 lord who is guardian of thy race. Whom shall thou be, such as never was since the world began; and in that hour of distress thy fellow-country-  
 1 man shall win deliverance, all whose names are found written when the  
 2 record here open. Many shall wake, that now lie sleeping in the dust of earth, some to enjoy life everlasting, some to be condemned for ever with  
 3 their dragons. Right shall be the glory of wise counsellors, as the radiance of the sky above; story-bright for ever their glory, who have taught many the right way.  
 4 For thyself, Daniel, keep this revelation locked away, sealed up the

<sup>1</sup> 'Macedon', or perhaps, 'Thracian.' But it is difficult to understand who are meant by 'their' in verse 19 if Macedonia is not a proper name. We do not meet the name elsewhere; on the other hand, attempts to identify the 'god of Thracians' are not altogether convincing.

<sup>2</sup> The Latin version here translates, 'his pavilion against.'

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew text is generally understood as meaning 'he reaches his end, and there is none to bring him aid.'

sound of it must be until the hour appointed. Leave others to listen to and for, in search of knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

Thus he speaks; and now, looking up, I saw two others that stood there, one on either bank of the stream. But he, the man clad in linen, stood there yet over the river itself; and when I asked how long these wondrous things should last, it was from him I had my answer. Both hands raised to heaven, he swore by the God who lives for ever that there should be an end to (a) it should last for a space of time, and for twice as long, and for half as long, no more. Strength of God's holy people must be broken utterly; when that is over, all is over and done.<sup>2</sup> So I had my answer, but I still could not tell the meaning of it; Ay, my Lord, I said, but what shall be the end of it all? Nay, Daniel, said he, no more of this; needs must that this revelation be shut away and sealed up, till the appointed hour comes; and still there shall be chosen souls a many, that are purged by the fire's smelting, and still there are sinners that will not leave their sinning. The riddle, for these others, a riddle must remain; but wise men shall there be that will find the clue to it. Of this be sure; after the time when the daily sacrifice is discontinued, and all becomes defilement and desolation, twelve hundred and sixty days must pass. Blessed shall be his lot be that waits patiently till twelve hundred and thirty five days are over.<sup>3</sup> And for thyself, Daniel, go thy way . . . till the end; till the end of the days that thou shalt, and rise to fulfil thy appointed destiny.<sup>4</sup>

## CHAPTER 13

THERE was a man called Josiah living in Babylon, married to one Susanna, daughter of Helcias.<sup>5</sup> This was a woman of great beauty, and one that feared God, as well had her parents, religious folk, schooled their daughter in the law of Moses. A rich man was Josiah, and had a fine garden close to his house; and he was much valued by the Jews, among whom there was none more honoured than he. There came a year in which these two rulers of the people were appointed judges, of

<sup>1</sup> The last part of this verse cannot be rendered with any certainty.

<sup>2</sup> Many run the end of the verse in variously interpreted.

<sup>3</sup> The figures given in verses 11 and 12, like those given in 8.14, are extraordinarily uncoordinated with the 'time, time and half a time' which is elsewhere given as the time-unit. Cf. Apoc. 11. 2, 14 and 13.5, where the time-unit is consistent.

<sup>4</sup> This verse is very obscure, and perhaps corrupt. The latter part of it is usually interpreted as meaning that Daniel will die and rise again to happiness in a future life; but if so all the words in it are used in an unaccustomed sense.

<sup>5</sup> This chapter, with chapter 14, is preserved in the Syriac text, but not in the Hebrew text.

when the Lord said, *Whoredoms has sprung up in Babylon, and the roots of it are these elders and judges who claim to rule the people!*

These two were often at Joshua's house, and all those who had disputes to settle appeared before them there.

As noon, when the common folk had returned home, Susanna would walk about in her husband's garden, and these two elders, who saw her go in and walk there day after day, fell to hating after her. Fierce they defamed her, and turned away their eyes from the sight of her even as soon as she came they would raise their fingers. The love that separated both, neither to other would disclose; confess it for very shame they might not, this hating after a woman's persons; yet day after day they seized the opportunity to have sight of her. A day came at last when one said to the other, *Thine go we, it is dinner-time; and go they did, taking the several ways; yet both returned her-door to their watching-place, and there met one another. So there was questioning on both sides, and out came the story of their love; and now they made common cause; at a suitable time they would waylay her together, when she was alone.*

They watched, then, for their opportunity; and when, as her custom was, went out one day with one of her maids, and had a mind to bathe, these in the garden, for it was summer weather, and none was by except the two elders; and they were in hiding, watching her. So she bade her servants go and bring her oil and soap, and shut the garden door while she was so-bathing. Her will was obeyed; shut the door of the garden they did, and went out by a back entrance to bring her what she had asked for; they knew nothing of the elders that were hiding there within. And these two, as soon as the servants were gone, rose from their hiding-place and sat by her side. See, they told her, the garden door is shut, and there is no witness by. We are both united with a desire for thy favour; come, then, let us enjoy then. Refuse, and we will bear witness that thou hadst a partner here; and this was the reason thou wouldst rid thyself of thy hand-maiden's company.

Wherupon Susanna grieved deeply; There is no escape for me, she said, either way. It is death if I consent, and if I refuse, I shall be at your mercy. Let me neither fall into your power through an act of mine, than commit sin in the Lord's sight. With this, Susanna cried aloud, and the elders, too, began crying shame on her; meanwhile, one of them ran to the garden door and opened it. And now the servants of the house, hearing such outcry in the garden, came running in through the back entrance to know what was afoot, and they were greatly shocked when the elders told their story; never before had Susanna been defamed thus.

When the morrow came, there was a throng of people in Joshua's

<sup>1</sup> Daniel speaks plain in an allusion to Jer. 23, 30-33.

house, and the two elders were there, intent upon their malicious design against Susanna's life. They asked publicly that Susanna, daughter of an Israelite and wife to Jonathan, should be sent first; sent for she was, and as came out with her parents and her children and all her kindred. So as chidey she was, and so fair, these two knaves would have her led down to her well, the better to enjoy the sight of her charms. All her friends, all in her acquaintance, were in tears. Then the two elders rose amidst the assembly, and laid their hands upon Susanna's head, while she, weeping, looked up to heaven, in token that her heart had not lost confidence in the Lord. We were walking in the garden apart, said the elders, when the two women came out with two hand-maidens. She had the garden door shut close, and sent the maidens away; whereupon a young man, who had been in hiding till then, came out and had his will with her. We, from a covert in the garden, saw what foul deed was being done, and ran up close, so that we had full view of their dalliance; but lay hold of the man we could not; he was too strong for us, opening the garden door and springing out. The women we caught, and asked her who her gallant was, but as she would not tell us. To all this, we bear witness.

They were elders, they were judges of the people, and they persuaded the assembly, without more ado, to pass the death sentence. Whereupon Susanna cried aloud, Blessed God, no secret is hidden from thee, nothing comes to pass without thy foreknowledge. Thou knowest that these men have borne false witness against me; with thee let me die, a woman innocent of all the charges their malice has invented? And the Lord listened to her plea; even as she was being led off to her death, all at once he seemed to utterance the holy spirit that dwelt in a young boy there, called Daniel. This Daniel raised his voice and cried out, I will be no party to the death of this woman; and when all the people turned upon him, asking what he meant, he stood there in their midst, and said, Are you as such fools, men of Israel, as to condemn an Israelite woman without trial, without investigation of the truth? Go back to the place of judgment; as the witness they have borne against her is false witness.

Eagerly enough the people went back, and the elders would have Daniel sit with them, such credit God had given him beyond his years. He bade them put the two men, as a dispute from each other, while he questioned them. So parted they went, and when the first was examined, thus Daniel greeted him: Grow as old as years, and years ill spent! Now, that past stealing of thine has found thee out, a man that perverts justice, persecutes innocence, and lets the guilty go free. Has not the Lord said, Never shall thou put the innocent man, the upright man, to death? Thou founder him; good; they are under a tree; tell us what kind of tree. And he answered, Under a male-tree I surprised thee. The right word! cried Daniel; pointed wonder thyself shall be, as

- 10 when God bade his angel require thee for his salary. Then he had this  
one reserved, and bade the other come near. Blood of Chanaan, said he,  
and no true son of Juda, so heavily stained dost thou hast done thy heart  
11 against? Such approaches you have made, long since, to women of the  
other tribes, and thou, from very fear, admitted your guilt; but you could  
12 not bring a woman of Juda to fall in with your wicked design. And now  
tell me, under what tree it was thou didst find them sitting together?  
13 Under a holm-oak, said he, I saw them. The right word again cried  
Daniel. Saw thee answer the angel of the Lord will, with the sharp  
blade he carries yonder; you are both dead men.  
14 And with that, the whole multitude cried aloud, blessing God that is  
15 the deliverer of those who trust in him. And they turned on the two  
elders, by Daniel's questioning self-accused of false witness; cursed they  
16 must be as they would have served others, and the law of Moses stayed;  
17 so they put them to death. That day, an innocent life was saved. Good  
cause had Heleas and his wife to praise God for their daughter Susanna,  
good cause had Josiah and all his friends; no breath of suspicion  
18 assailed her name. And as for Daniel, he was in high favour with all the  
people from that day forward.  
19 When king Sargages became part of his line, it was Cyrus, the Persian,  
succeeded him.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER 14

- 1 **O**F this king, Daniel was the courtier, and valued above all his other  
friends. A great idol there was, that the men of Babylon worshipped;  
Bel was the name of it, and day by day it must be fed with thirty-two  
bushels of fine flour, and forty sheep, and of wine thirty-six gallons.  
2 The king himself honoured it with the rest, and no day passed but he  
went to pay it reverence. A time came when he asked Daniel, that wor-  
3 shipped no God but his own, why Bel he would not worship; and this  
answer Daniel made him, that the idols made by men's hands worship  
he had none, only for that living God that made heaven and earth, and  
4 of all mankind held the sovereignty. What, cried the king, wilt thou have  
5 of Bel is not a living god? Hast thou no eyes for the great wickedness he  
6 is, day in, day out, of food and drink best? Nay, my lord king, Daniel  
answered with a smile, give me leave to falsify tales. May he be richer, and  
7 become wiser; I warrant thee, not be poorer. Whereupon the king, in  
8 his displeasure, summoned Bel's priests. You shall give account, said

<sup>1</sup> This verse evidently belongs to the next chapter. But it only gives us a loose historical reference; it was only after he had been king of Media for twelve years that Cyrus conquered Babylon.

be, of yonder sorceress, and that on pain of your lives. Who is it has th' casting of them? Prove to me it is Bel himself, and Daniel shall die hanged that blasphemed him. As it pleases the king's grace, said Daniel.

Company of those priests: those were, that had wives and children to feed for families. And when the king reached their temple, with Daniel to attendance, this challenge they offered: Withdrew we, as thou seest for thee it is, lord king, to eat food, pour out wine, lock and seal door with thy own hand. To-morrow, come thou and find Bel feeding, we do for it; or else Daniel dies, that is trophied us. Lightly enough the challenge was made, had they not provided a hidden entrance-way, close under the god's table, by which they came in and ate what eat they would: So eat they went, and the king sat on Bel's vineyard with his own hand and what did Daniel? He would have his servants bring axes, and scathe them all over the temple floor, there is the king's presence. Which done all withdraw, leaving the door locked, and the royal seal upon it. And that night as they came as came they ever, priest and priest's wife and priest's children, and left neither life nor sup between them.

Next day, the king was early abroad, and Daniel with him. What of the seals, Daniel? the king asked. Are they safe? Ay, my lord king, safe enough. What a cry was that the king gave, when he opened the door and caught sight of the table within! A grove god those are, Bel, said he, and no deceiver! But Daniel smiled, and would not have the king go in yet; Look thou there, he said, and ask thyself who it was left their priests on yonder floor. Why, cried the king, these be first-priests of living men, and women and children besides! With that, he fell into a rage; priest and priest's wife and priest's children must be taken into custody. And when these had shewed him the door by which they came in and swept the table bare of its offerings, he put the whole company of them to death. And as for Bel, he left him to Daniel's mercy, who threw down image and temple both.

There was a great serpent, too, in those parts that was worshipped by the folk of Babylon; and of this the king said to Daniel, here at least was a god that lived; getting that he could not, and therefore he needs some worship. Nay, said Daniel, my own God I worship still; living God is more to be. Here is no living God; but we has have the royal warrant, and I will make an end of it, and neither sword nor club to help me. So the king gave his warrant, and what did Daniel? Fetch and tie well hairs he boiled all together, and with fumes of this fed the serpent, which straightway burst all to pieces; and, Here, said Daniel, is your god.

Angry men were the folk of Babylon when they heard of these doings, and they made their way into the royal presence, crying out, Here is the king himself turned Jew! Here is Bel overthrown, and the dragon slain, and our priests massacred! And when they found audience, Give up

Daniel to us, they said, as we will make an end of thee, and thy house-  
hold with thee. The king, finding their counsel not so determined, gave  
up Daniel to them against his will; and they threw him into a pit in  
which lions were kept, where he spent his whole days. Seven lions there  
were in the pit, and each day two human bodies were given them as food,  
and two sheep; but now they were kept unfed, so that Daniel might be  
their prey.

For many, in Judaea, the prophet Habacuc had been making broth,  
and crumbing bread in a great bowl, and was even now carrying it to  
the vapours on the flames; when suddenly the angel of the Lord said to  
him, Take this dinner thou hast prepared to Babylon, and give it to  
Daniel; he is in the lion-pit. Lord, said Habacuc, I was never yet in  
Babylon, and know nothing of any lion-pit there. Upon which the angel  
of the Lord caught at his head and lifted him by the hair of it; then by  
the force of his inspiration, set him down in Babylon, close to the pit. So  
Habacuc cried out, Daniel! Servant of God! The Lord has sent thee thy  
dinner; come and take it. And Daniel said, Thou wilt not forget me,  
O God, wilt thou not forsake such as love thee. So he rose and ate, while  
the angel of the Lord brought Habacuc, all at once, back to his house.

When the seventh day came, the king went out to mourn for Daniel;  
and rare, reaching the pit and looking in, he saw Daniel seated there  
among the lions. And at that, the king cried aloud, How great thou art,  
O Lord, thou who art Daniel's God! And he took him out of the lion-pit,  
and set up there instead the men who had conspired to ruin him; and  
in a moment, as he wished, the lions devoured them. Whereupon the  
king said, Well may the whole world stand in awe of Daniel's God. What  
deliverance he affords, what signal proofs of his power, have on earth,  
the God who has rescued Daniel out of a den of lions!



## THE PROPHECY OF OSEE

### CHAPTER I

THIS is the message which came from the Lord to Osee, son of Beeri, during the reigns of Oziel, Joatham, Achaz and Sennacherib in Judah, and during the reign of Jeroboam, son of Joash, in Israel.

When first the divine voice made itself heard through Osee, this was the command given him: *Womans wed thee, womans breed thou; in a womans hand thou shalt dwell, that keeps truth with its Lord never.* So it was he came to marry Gomer, a daughter of Debelaiim.<sup>1</sup> When he got her with child, and she bore him a son, This son, the Lord said him, thou art to call Jerubab; *as Jerubab the blood was spilt<sup>2</sup> for which, ere long, Jotha's line must be punished, and Israel have kings no more; in Jerubab's valley, my down is, bow of Israel shall be broken.* And then, she was brought to bed of a daughter; of whom the Lord said, *Unbelovedest call her, in token that I will belittle Israel no longer, lead them no longer.* To Judah I will be a friend yet, not with bow or sword of things delivering them, not in battle, with horse or horseman to give aid, but by the power of the Lord their God only.

Unbelovedest, then, was the name of her; and after she was weaned, once more Gomer conceived, and had a son. This time the command was, *Call him Strange-folk; no longer shall you be my people, as I be your . . .<sup>3</sup>*

. . . *Meanwhile the race of Israel shall be sad countless as the sand to by the sea shore. In the very place where once the down was weaned, You are but strangers to me, they shall be welcomed as sons of the living God. As one people, Jews and Israel shall be united, under a leader of their common choice, and they shall come flocking from every corner of the land; such great things these shall be as Jerubab.*

<sup>1</sup> It is not clear whether the nameless here described took place in real life, or in a vision.

<sup>2</sup> This perhaps refers to the massacre described in 2K Kg. 10.1-11.

<sup>3</sup> It seems almost certain that there is an omission at the end of verse 6, the word "God" being needed to complete the sense. It may be questioned whether the gap is not more considerable. We should expect more information about the history of Osee's family, or perhaps as for the allusion of chapters 2 and 3 inseparable, the abrupt change of situation in verses 20 and 21 appears to demand some kind of introduction. Some think verses 16 and 17 have been accidentally misplaced, and belong to the end of chapter 2.

## CHAPTER 3

- G**ODS-POLE and Beloved, these are the names they should have  
 by rights, brother and sister of yours. Blame her, blame your  
 mother, that she is no true wife of mine, nor I any longer her Lord. Must  
 she still thrust the harlot's face of her, the wantonness of her habits?  
 Must I call her, leave her named as false new-born, leave her dwellers  
 as the barren waste, the trackless desert, no life of mine? These children  
 of hers, must I needs leave them uncared, the children of her shame?  
 Harlot mother of theirs brought reproach on the womb that bore them!  
 Haste I away, she said, to these goddesses of mine, the gods of whose gift  
 bread comes to me, and water, wind and flax, oil and wine! See if I do not  
 hedge her way about with thorns, since in her prospect, all way she can  
 find none! Then, it may be, when her gallants she courts in vain, searches  
 for them in vain, she will have other thoughts: Best go I to the husband  
 that was mine once; things were better with me in days gone by.  
 Yet if it was, did she but know it, that bread and wine and oil gave her,  
 gave her all the silver and gold she squandered on Baal. And now I  
 mean to revoke the gift, no harvest for her, no vintage: I will give wool  
 and flax a holiday, that once laboured to serve her change; no gallant of  
 hers but shall see and grieve at it; such is my will, and none shall dream  
 me. Gone the days of rejoicing, the days of merriment; gone is new moon,  
 and sabbath, and festival; vine and fig-tree blighted, whose fruit, she  
 told herself, was but the hire those lovers paid; all shall be woodlaid, for  
 the wild beasts to ravage as they will. Penance she must do for that day-  
 day of idleness, when the fountains ceased, and out she went, all rings and  
 necklaces, to meet her lovers, the gods of the countryside, and for me,  
 the Lord says, never a thought!  
 It is but love's weakness, then to lead her out into the wilderness, were  
 there, it shall be all words of comfort. Glad is vineyard that wilderness  
 shall be, that vale of sad memory; a passage-way of hope; and a song shall  
 be on her lips, the very music of her youth, when I rescued her from  
 Egypt long ago. Husband she calls me now, the Lord says, Master no  
 longer: that name I still on her lips; master-gods of the countryside  
 are none all to be forgotten! Beast and bird and creeping thing to peace pledge

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'the rule of Acher'; see Job. 7.26. It may be, however, that no historical allusion is intended; the valley in question is mentioned by Isidore (99.10) in a quite general context.

<sup>2</sup> A. Harnack would identify her husband as her *ba'al*, i.e., 'proprietor'; the same word was used for those proprietary gods who were supposed to control the harvest, the vintage, etc.

In bow and sword and war's alarms break if all shall they safe shed, the folk that dwell in her.

Unwillingly I will betroth thee to myself, froward and odious and of many of mine thy dowry: by the keeping of his truth thou shalt learn to know the Lord. When that day comes, between shall win-answers, the Lord is says, answers from me; and from heaven, earth; and from earth, the corn is and wine and oil is answering and from them, the people of my saying.<sup>1</sup> Deep, deep I will see them in the land I love, a friend, now, to her that was Unbelievably to a people that was none of mine I will say, Thou art my people, and they to me, Thou art my God.

## CHAPTER 3

THE Lord's word came to me: To wife that will have gallants a-counting her, show thyself a lover yet. The Lord is yet Israel's lover, that has no spot but for alien gods, leaves grape for baith.<sup>2</sup>

So buy her back to me I mean, fifteen pieces of silver paying for her ransom, and a core and a half of barley. A long time thou must wait for me, I told her, thy wantonness leaving, yet still unweid; and I will wait for thee as faithfully.

A long time the sons of Israel must wait, neither king nor prince to rule them, neither sacrifice nor oblation to worship at, neither sacred month nor their own images to consult. Then they will come back, and to the Lord, their own God, beside them, and to David that is their true king: the Lord, and the Lord's goodness, holds them spell-bound at her.

## CHAPTER 4

LISTEN, sons of Israel, to a message from the Lord, notice of a suit the profess against all that dwell in this land of yours; a land where loyalty, and tenderness of heart, and knowledge of God is none. Cattle they eat the, murder they not mind and live adulterously, all there is no checking it; never find ends but another find begins. What wonder the land has withered, and its folk dissidles gone, beast and bird, and the sea-beach gilled high with fish? Nay, let us have no accommodations between man and man; so should this people of thine fall to railing at their priors. Fear for thee, in point, this day, and, come night, the people

<sup>1</sup> "The people of my saying": literally, 'Jehovah's' (i.e., God's) saying. It seems clear that the word in echo of the foregoing chapter, is used here in a kind of shorthand for 'Israel'.

<sup>2</sup> "Leaves grapes for baith": or perhaps 'leaves white-wines' (deliberately).

- 1 shall share thy ruin;<sup>1</sup> name of the mother that bore thee shall perish, as,  
through thy fault, this people of mine perishes for want of knowledge.  
Knowledge wouldst thou spare, and shall not I spare thy priesthood  
my law wouldst thou forget, and shall not of mine be spared oblivion?  
2 Priests among, and thou to search their number; shall that title bring glory  
3 any longer, and not reproach? Faint if Israel committed, gaily if Israel  
4 incurred, is was but the meat and drink such priests craved for.<sup>2</sup> Priest,  
how, shall fare no better than people; he shall pay for his ill living, reap  
5 what his false aims deserve; greed, that remained still unsated, warlike-  
ness, that could never have enough. Ah, fearless gentlemen, that you  
6 should play your Lord false! That defiance, and wine, and revelry,  
should so smelt away your wit!
- 7 And what of my people? For where they have recourse to true-stump-or  
senseless wood, for an answer to their perjured Lure for strange  
8 worship swing them away, made them false to their truth with God; on  
mountains and hill-side, under leafy shade of oak, poplar or terebinth,  
fells victims, smokes incense of their. What wonder daemons should turn  
9 harlots, where play the warms? Hecate daughters and adulterous with  
10 shall go unspanned; what did fathers and husbands, but keep harlots' com-  
pany, share revel with consecrated maidens? What wit, be sure a people  
is misled.
- 11 Woe that Israel be, at least let Juda shun the wrong; nor for them  
the way that leads to Galgal, Bethaven's pilgrimage, or the oath taken by  
the living God . . .<sup>3</sup>
- 12 Sucklens as fishing halibut, Israel turns away the head would you have  
13 the Lord find him, like a covey hunt, unconfined? Wretched to him, this  
14 Egyptian; go his own way he must; here he revels that will keep their  
own company, here be idolaters in grain, and priests that close still on  
15 their own disgrace. Ay, but a storm is coming that shall carry them away  
on its wings, to see the travelling sacrifice.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The use of verses 2 and 3 is barely noticeable, and is easily suspected of being corrupt. The word 'priest' only occurs once in the original, but there is an telling whether it is meant to be the last word of verse 2 or the first of verse 3: possibly it occurred in both places and, through inadvertence, was written over instead of twice.

<sup>2</sup> Unless the prophet is using a somewhat violent metaphor, there is probably an allusion to the sacrifices offered in expiation, when the law had been transgressed, and to the priests' share in them.

<sup>3</sup> The interpretation of this verse is very uncertain.

<sup>4</sup> It seems clear that the verse, as it stands, is incomplete, and some think a reference to Jeremiah has fallen out (cf. Am. 3.1). The reference to an oath, even so, is puzzling; but cf. Am. 8.14.

<sup>5</sup> In verse 18 and 19, once more the summary of the Hebrew text only be doubted; in verse 20, no more can be made of it at all.

# CHAPTER 3

**P**<sup>3</sup>RIEST and people, hear and heed! And you, too, mark it well, men of the court, whose lot yours the blame, if there are scars on every commanding height,<sup>1</sup> if Tabor itself is ringed with rails, and your quarry is driven down to the depths! But to all alike comes the warning: Think you that I have no eyes for Ephraim's wantonness? that Israel escapes my scrutiny, Israel, so deluded? Return to the Lord! Not for such heurs the message, but for strange worship is there, and of the Lord they seek nothing. Self-confessed, the pride of Israel; what wonder Israel ... and Ephraim should be entangled in guilt?<sup>2</sup> Judah itself shall not escape their downfall. All their flocks and herds shall not win them access to the Lord; he stands aloof from them, sinners that have defiled him; a bastard brood, that are powder upon rivers now shall be disabered and brought to nothing.<sup>3</sup>

The trumpet, there, in Gaba; at Rama sound for battle; let Bethaven echo with the rufing-cry! Benjamin, to arms! Alas for Ephraim, in the hour of punishment left desolate! Mine to watch Israel's rather a lesson of infidelity. And what of Judah's chastisement? A neighbor's hand-mark is scraped they never to remove; on them, too, the full flood of my vengeance shall come down. Pace Ephraim, ever since he set his face to a word the mine, all is opposition with him, all is judgment gone astray. And all the while I, once other, wear away strength of Ephraim and Judah is still; moth nor canker is sure! What did Ephraim, in his great sick-ness, what did Judah, bound hand and foot? To Asaph Ephraim would dispatch envoys, to yonder ruthless king; but had you he could see, nor wailed. Mine the encounter Ephraim has to face, and Judah both; lion's is den nor whelp needs prey and carries it off so tamely. All in a moment come and gone whence I called! Who knows if weakness will drive you back to my presence?<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The 'commanding height' may also be read as a proper name, Marpha. It is not clear whether the hills are mentioned merely as a setting for the campaign, or as places where idolatrous worship was in fact conducted.

<sup>2</sup> 'Israel' and 'Ephraim' are rather synonymous; it looks as if a verb might have fallen out in the manuscript.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'They have begotten since childhood gone a smooth path down them with their testimony,' an obscure phrase which is perhaps corrupt.

<sup>4</sup> The disorder in verses 8-11, is not easy to surmise. It would appear that a common danger threatened the two kingdoms. Judah is invited to bring aid to Israel (verse 8), but fails to do so (verse 9), and perhaps even takes advantage of Israel's embarrassment to make territorial acquisitions (verse 10). It is hard to

## CHAPTER 6

**A**Y, in their distress they will be making full early at my door; Back  
 1 Are the Lord I will be their cry; unless he only can bring, that wounded  
 2 my hand that smote us shall heal. Dried man to-day and to-morrow, on  
 the third day he will raise us up again, to live in his presence more.  
 Acknowledge we, once we serve to acknowledge the Lord, he will reveal  
 himself, raise us the dawn, come back to us, sure as the rising of winter and  
 3 spring comes back to the earth. What way will serve with you, men of  
 Ephraim? Judah, what way will serve? Both of yours is but momentary,  
 4 fades like the early mist, like morning dew. What wonder I should send  
 prophets first, to shape men to my will if they could, and then utter my  
 sentence of ruin? Believe me, this doom of thine shall be clear as daylight.  
 5 A tender heart will throw with me, not sacrifice; God's acknowledging,  
 6 not victim's destroying; and these be very children of Adam, keep truth  
 7 they cannot, here is a land where my will is set at defiance.<sup>1</sup> What is  
 Gilead but a stronghold of blood, belabored with sorceries of blood?  
 8 Not much imports it, company of priests that meet on Jericho road, as  
 many of robbers sharing for men's lives; be sure there is mischief afoot?  
 9 A foul deed I see done in Israel.<sup>2</sup> Ephraim so wretched, Israel so defiled,  
 10 and, Judah, what of thyself? For thee, no harvest!<sup>3</sup>

When I rescue my people from exile . . .

## CHAPTER 7

**W**HEN I would gaze<sup>1</sup> looking to Israel . . .

Post shows the guilt of Ephraim, Samaria's malice is plain to  
 view. What a workshop of wrong-doing is here, all thieving within doors,  
 we suspect the signet can have stolen, it was from Samaria that 12 churches  
 probably indicate, not an appeal to Assyria for help, but an attempt to buy off  
 the invaders, such as that made by King Sennacherib (cf. Kg. 19.12).

<sup>1</sup> There is considerable reason to think that the sort of verse 7-11 has suffered  
 from corruption in the manuscript. Verse 7 reads literally, 'These, like Adam,  
 have sinned; they have believed wickedly; certainly not they'—the last word  
 suggests that a place name should appear in the first half of the verse, possibly  
 Adam (cf. 1.26).

<sup>2</sup> This verse is understandable in the Hebrew text as it stands, and the Latin  
 version of it offers no grammatical reconstruction.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'in the breast of Israel,' perhaps a false reading for 'in Bethel.'

<sup>4</sup> Verse 11 remains wholly obscure; some think the latter part of it really belongs  
 to chapter 7.

<sup>5</sup> So the Latin version, but the Hebrew text and the Septuagint Greek are more  
 accurately translated, 'When I gaze.' It seems doubtful, therefore, whether the  
 first seven words of the verse really fit on to what follows.

all robbery withdrawn! Let them never complain, I am too nice over the  
 censuring of their misdeeds; why, they blame these ill designs of theirs,  
 under my very eye! King himself! there is no pleasing but by villainy,  
 see his notions but by flattering speeches; false is every one of them to  
 his truth. What else is this whole series but hakes that lighten his face, and  
 then take a rest from his kneeling, leaves rest to spread as it will  
 Haines for our king? Ay, but see how the prisoners fall in their censuring,  
 and he himself coaches out for the wise, reckless as they! Their scheming  
 adds fuel to the fire; are there not pits about? Scorp hake the long night  
 through, and morning finds him flaming hot like the rest. A very furnace  
 the city is; ruler may not abide nor king stand before the heat of it, and  
 never a man among them breathes my name! What wonder Ephraim  
 should flee in his lot with the Gentiles? No better than a girdle-robe is  
 Ephraim, hated only on one side.<sup>1</sup>

Foreign neighbours, all unwarlike, have divided the strength of him;  
 the dark beds, all narrow, dappled with grey, and even now self-  
 condemned stands the pride of Israel;<sup>2</sup> none is the Lord, secure to the  
 Lord is none, even none. Never silly down to last but wins as this Ephraim,  
 now calling on Egypt, now turning to Assyria for aid! Faint the journey to  
 my net I mean to spread over them, snare them as in the fowler's snare;  
 public the chastisement shall be, as public the warning. Dearly they  
 shall pay for their wandering from me, ruin follow on the heels of rebel-  
 lion; I shall remember, and they be false! Never do their hearts cry out  
 to me; growl they like bear in den, or beast like ox and drink and chew  
 the cud, yet they have forsaken.<sup>3</sup> Now I chastise them, now I strengthen  
 as their hands, and still they have no thought for me but of hatred: ever as  
 they step back from the pole,<sup>4</sup> like a twisted bow recoil.

<sup>1</sup> 'Haine the way long?' literally, 'The day of our king'; cf. IV Kg. 1.11.

<sup>2</sup> The allegory from Isaiah seems to be a double one: the latter apparently the people of Israel goes to sleep and lets the lion Hame up, instead of keeping a watchful hear, and at the same time he does not finish kneeling the depth, so that the result is a half-baked sort of things. The application is not really made, but perhaps the passage within the disappointment of God-fearing people at the collapse of Jehu's dynasty into idolatry, after the overthrow of Ahab's Baal-worship. The ruling then, it seems to be indicated, are the wrong for the new sovereigns, and the old ways come back again.

<sup>3</sup> Half-condemned stands the pride of Israel; for some words are used as in 1.3 above, but the Latin version here has 'The pride of Israel shall be founded before his very eyes.' It seems unlikely that we are meant to keep the interpretation in this way.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'And they did not cry out to me with their hearts, but howled in their beds, showed the cud-ox without and wine, departed from me.' It 'showed the cud' is the right interpretation of the next verb used, we must suppose that the Israelites are being compared to dumb beasts. But it seems likely that the text is corrupt.

<sup>5</sup> The Hebrew text is usually interpreted as meaning, 'They were, they are

Put to the sword, their tablets must be, rolling tongues the ruin of them.  
This the curse that shall be uttered against them in the land of Egypt . . .

# CHAPTER I

THE trumpet in thy mouth, Eagle's wings threatening the Lord's  
desecrated Canaanites of faith forewarn, of my law defiled, to me  
Israel cries out, My God! cries out, We acknowledge thee! Ransomed,  
poor Israel, from the good that was his, and the many pointing hand  
upon him.

Slays a many, and with no warrant from our priests a many, that  
were none of my choosing; kills a many, of their own gold and silver  
misused; here is cause enough for their seeking. Cast calf, Samaria, is  
pander calf of thine; for this burning altison, it shall be long ere thou  
durst find acquittal. Israel gave birth to it, this calf of Samaria, that  
came of man's fashioning, and god is none. It shall be known that as  
Satan.

See the wind, reap the whirlwind; angry man is angry his, and here  
if grain is any, alien folk shall have the grinding of it. Fear Israel, already  
engulfed, the brethren all around making a despised tool of him! Lone as  
wild as in the desert, so *Asaph* he betrays himself, if man he would,  
he must pay for his delinquency. Well, hire they exterminators where they  
will, they shall be creeped up in their own land upon the loss, and have  
rejoice from the execution of king and nobles both.<sup>1</sup>

So many the altar Ephraim has, and they shall increase his guilt, none  
of them but shall increase his guilt; so many the laws I give him, and all  
shall wear unaccomplished. Appointed sacrifices<sup>2</sup> they still offer, flocks of the  
sacrifice still eat, but the Lord will have none of it; no more their guilt

apostrophe, a phrase which leaves a good deal to the imagination. The latter part  
of the verse, if the text is genuine, can hardly be understood except on the  
supposition that some words have fallen out at the end of it.

<sup>1</sup> As before, it is difficult to feel certain that the way has been preserved in its  
original state. Literally, the passage reads: "To thy palace the Jews, like an eagle  
upon the house of the Lord, because they have overstepped my covenant and  
unrepented about my law, as me they shall cry out, My God, we recognize thee,  
Israel!"

<sup>2</sup> Literally, "Even if they hire among the nations, now I will collect them,  
and they shall cease for a little from the burden of king of nations." Verses 7-10  
are best explained if we suppose that Jacobites II only was his resources against  
Babylon as the price of killing in America with this meant burdening the people  
with taxation and, ultimately, involving the national independence.

<sup>3</sup> "Appointed sacrifices," this seems the most probable translation of a word which  
in the Hebrew text, for which the Latin version only gives us a simple equivalent.



shall go unrecorded, their sins unpunished; Egypt once again for them! The God that made them forgotten, Israel's false shrine and Jeda's image—<sup>1</sup> hold still; but the fire I am kindling shall fall upon Jeda's crops, shall devour them, shrivel and all.

## CHAPTER 9

**N**O rejoicing, Israel, no cries of gladness now! Wouldst thou be like the heathen, and rejoice that thou hast played thy God false, ever calling thy sinners to the first corner, in scorn for a still clanking-doe?<sup>2</sup> Not for such raptures harvest and vintage, the western coast go without her wine: dispossessed, now, the Lord's territory, Ephraim back in Egypt again, or tending, among the Assyrians, unshadowed food. Liberties shall be none to win the Lord's favour, nor any sacrifice, Israel of theirs shall be as the bread we eat, doiling to the lips; all their holies it may, but into the Lord's house it cannot come. Alas, what shift will you make when the great days come round, the Lord's festivals? Ruin fall on the citizens, and they are gone, Egypt the home of them now, Memphis the seat of them; houses that shone with silver the natives have claimed, burlocks grow in the doorways.

Close at hand the death-day, the doom close at hand! And wouldst thou know, Israel, why prophet is named fool, and he can but rave now that once was inspired? God's heavy plague is this for thy much sinning, prophet of thine, wondrous of thine, Ephraim, is a snare at every turn, a luring due to thy role, and at God's decree; he stands there in God's house, a plague to thee. So deep the cancer of their sin; Gebaa itself never knew worse wrong. For the remembered guilt of it they shall be called to account.<sup>3</sup>

When I kept Syria with Israel long ago, save the encounter, as of grapes we sat in the desert, of spring days a-sipping high up on the tree. And all at once to Beelphegor they brook themselves, sold honour for shame, caught foul contagion from the things they loved! Light as bird on a bough, Ephraim's glory has come and gone; waste is none that breeds, or, breeding, bears; up, though they should bring sons to manhood, no children their race shall be, nameless among men.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'bring him upon all the clanking-does of silver.' There can be little doubt that the reference is to the worship of the many-god gods, or Baalim, who were supposed to have a special influence over the harvest.

<sup>2</sup> The sense of verses 7-9 can only be guessed at, and more modern editors suggest the text of corruption. In verse 8, 'God's decree' is 'my God's decree,' and 'God's house' is 'his God's house' in the original. The mention of Gebaa in verse 9 is explained by some as a reference to Jg. 19 and 20, but there can be no certainty on the point.

- 12 We beside them indeed, when I withdrew my presence from them!  
 Ephraim's land, so fair a garden, as I look out over it towards Tyre!  
 13 And near Ephraim near her men for the slaughter-house? Thy gift to  
 them, Lord, what is the best gift they can have of thee? A sheaf,  
 14 a security, that miscarries, and dried-up breasts? See where, as Galgal,  
 their officers come to a head, there it is they have made an enemy of us.  
 They shall dwell in my disgust no longer, claim love from me no longer;  
 15 chieftains of theirs are no vessels of mine. On Ephraim blight has fallen;  
 withered the root now, withered the fruits began, they. Scorn of death is as  
 16 their offering, so dearly loved. Cast away, my God, from thy presence,  
 because loved thus they would not, cast away to wander homeless  
 through the world!

## CHAPTER 18

- A** SPREADING vine is yonder vine of Israel, and fruit of him matches  
 Israel. Rich, fertile soil; alas, how rich in sinners, in sacred men how  
 1 fertilised! A race half loyal, half false, but the penalty must be paid in full;  
 those others God himself will devote to destruction, strip these trees bare!  
 2 King we have none, you say; God we fear none; what of the great king?  
 3 What will he do to us? All is vain promise and making of treaties; none  
 a future in your land but shall yield the bitter fruit of punishment.  
 4 Call<sup>1</sup> of Becharan, the folk of Samaria once honoured, what ado is  
 here! Mourners people and wretches point at the passing of its glory  
 5 carried off, now, into Assyria, for the pleasure of a ruthless king; faded  
 6 is Ephraim, Israel's hopes have played him false. Like foam on the  
 7 river Samaria near her king pass by; and with them, vanish the hill-shrines  
 of false worship, Israel's darling sin; grown thorn and thistle on their  
 altars; no prayer have the men of Israel now but that destruction should  
 fall on them, hills should bury them alive.

<sup>1</sup> The use of language here is avoided, and does not suggest the possibility of corruption in the text. 'The slaughter-house' may refer to the worship of Moloch (cf. 10. 10, 11) or simply to the massacre that will accompany the capture of Samaria.

<sup>2</sup> This verse is most easily understood if we suppose (as is most likely) that the Banishers were not clear in their own minds whether the hill-shrines, etc., were devoted to the worship of the true God or not.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'For now they will be saying, We have no king, because we do not fear God; what will the king do to us, that? but you must say speak perfused words in making a treaty; therefore judgement springs up in their houses like barbed.' It is hard to tell exactly about the meaning or bearing of the passage.

<sup>4</sup> 'Call' is the Syriac Greek. The Hebrew text, like the Latin version, gives 'wretch,' followed by a somewhat singular pronoun in the rest of the sentence.

Old is the tale of Israel's guilt, old as what befell at Gethse; there stood  
they unmoved, was it not at Gethse the tide of battle reached them, battle  
against the champions of wrong?<sup>1</sup>

A jealous chamber I will be to them; reward their guilt, and among the  
nations I will answer for their chastisement. Heir to the law learned the  
wisdoms of the threshing-floor, such is Sopherim that work seek of  
him I have spared till now; now she is to be humbled when I do give  
a-ploughing, Jacob it shall be that breaks the clods for him.<sup>2</sup>

If mercy is to be the measure you reap by, need of yours must be shown as  
in right doing; thus are fallen acres to be tilled. Not too late to have  
recourse to the Lord, waiting for him to come and bring<sup>3</sup> you judges!  
But alas, shameful failure<sup>4</sup> they were you traced, and what came of it? Is  
A harvest of wrong, fruit that doated you in the treading!

So then wouldst thou in thy own device, in thy own warrior strength!  
Believe me, there shall be turmoil among thy folk, and all thy strongholds  
shall fall, as fell Salsama before Jericho! when the day was won, full  
still, full mother, doated to give. So much shall yonder Bethel  
conserve! the holocausts of your guilt!

## CHAPTER 12

SOOON fades the dawn; noon passes king of Israel.

Israel in his boyhood, when love I bore him Away from Egypt I  
brought him, henceforth my son.<sup>5</sup>

... They called them, the men they refused obedience, gods of the  
country-side must have their victims, double slain their inmost! Yet is  
was I, alone alone, guided these first steps of theirs, and took them in my  
arms, and banded, all unobserved, they leaped. *Spies of Salsama, they*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 10. 20 above. Here, as there, some think the reference is to 10. 20 but it may really be to some incident not elsewhere recorded.

<sup>2</sup> The last part of this verse is usually translated, 'Jeda shall plough, and Jacob shall break the clods for him.' But the expression 'for himself' seems curiously inappropriate.

<sup>3</sup> The verb used in the Hebrew text may mean either 'sue down' or 'sue.'.

<sup>4</sup> (*Shameful failure*) is not hardly to be a coincidence that the Hebrew verb used can mean either 'ploughing' or 'winning images.'

<sup>5</sup> According to the Hebrew text 'an Salsama (quite differently spelt) destroyed Beth-el'! as even so elsewhere alluded to.

<sup>6</sup> The Hebrew text, at the end of the verse, is naturally understood as meaning, 'I called him to be my son.' If this is authentic, we must suppose that a different colour was given to it in early times of Mt. 2. 15. The Septuagint Greek has, 'I called him children.'

<sup>7</sup> Although the subject of verse 2 is continued, it looks as if one or two words had been accidentally omitted.

should be drawn with leading-strings of iron; never yuguet was it more  
pains to cast bridle on him, led him so carefully.

- 2 Never again to Egypt; Assyria shall rule him now, the war-priests;  
3 already the vessel is broken in those vessels of his, the house shall engulf  
4 the wife shall devour. Can my people be reconciled with me? All hangs  
in doubt, until at last I put a yoke on all alike, never to be taken away  
5 from them.<sup>1</sup> What, Ephraim, must I abandon thee? Must I keep Israel  
under watch and ward? Can I let thee go the way of Achana, share the  
doom of Schepia? All at once my heart forgives me, and from its no-man's  
6-land retreats. How should I wreak my vengeance, if Ephraim take fall  
till?

- God am I, not a man in the midst of you, the Holy One, that may not  
7 enter these city walls;<sup>2</sup> the Lord must lead, and man follow.<sup>3</sup>

- Lord he will call, like him crying, and at the sound of it, sons of Ma  
8 will come trembling from the distant east, fluttering like sparrow or dove  
from Egypt, from the Assyrian country, and in their own house, the Lord  
says, I will give them rest.

- 9 Ephraim so false, Israel so treacherous, all about me! But Juda governs  
his folk with God to aid him; Juda takes part with the holy ones, loyal  
yet.<sup>4</sup>

## CHAPTER 12

**E**PHRAIM, that would still play shepherd to the wind, still hunt in  
the track of the storm, and nothing heard up but treachery, nothing  
but his own ruin! See him making treaties with the Assyrians, sending  
tributes of oil to Egypt! On Juda's part the Lord takes up the quarrel,  
will call Jacob to account,<sup>5</sup> for all deeds and all designs surrounding him.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'The vessel has broken in his vessels, and shall consume his chosen  
sons, and destroy their heads; and my people shall have to me return a yoke  
shall be put on them at the same time, which shall not be taken away.' The  
Hebrew text differs considerably, but is equally obscure.

<sup>2</sup> The first sentence of this verse may be read as a statement, 'I will not wreak  
my vengeance,' or as a question, 'Shall I not wreak my vengeance?' The remaining  
part reads literally, 'For I am God and not man in the midst of thee; and I  
will not go into the day'; an obscure phrase, and perhaps corrupt.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'They shall go behind the Lord.' The rest of this verse, with  
verse 11, cannot easily be fitted into the context, and was perhaps misplaced.

<sup>4</sup> The language of this verse is manifestly Jewish, if it has been correctly  
preserved, 'the holy ones' is perhaps best understood as the (non-orthodox) people.

<sup>5</sup> Literally, 'And there is a quarrel to the Lord with Juda, and to the calling  
in account of Jacob.' In view of 12.12, it does not seem likely that the Lord's  
quarrel here is against Juda.

Here was one that took precedence of<sup>1</sup> his brother even in the weakness; strength was his, of celestial strength the rival. Did he not hold his own in contest with an angel, and prefer, with tears, his suit? *Alas*, and what of that encounter at Bethel, when the promise came to us: from him, the Lord of hosts, from Jeshu, name of return?<sup>2</sup>

Wouldst thou to thy God return? A tender heart keep thou close, and a right mind, and wait for thy God's help continually.

Is it the Chameleón that carries false weights, and loves ill gotten gain? Here is Ephraim boasting that he has grown rich, has found a false god to worship; will not these earnings of unice, think he, buy me out from the punishment I have deserved?<sup>3</sup>

I, the Lord, thy God in Egypt, and thy God still Once again thou a stain dost in me, as in the days when I kept trust with thee? Once again I will bestow<sup>4</sup> silence upon the prophets. Mine it is, by the prophets' means, to grant clear vision, to speak in parables.

If Galad is all idolatry, vain the sacrifice of men that is made at Gal: a gulf where heaps their altars shall be, out in the plough-lands.<sup>5</sup>

There was when Jacob fled to the Aram country; Israel weaned for a wife, and for that wife's sake loyally kept his troth. There was, when the Lord rescued Israel from Egypt by a prophet's means, and, for that prophet's sake loyally preserved them.<sup>6</sup>

For bitter jealousy of mine Ephraim must pay the penalty; spared a Master spurs him now.

<sup>1</sup> 'Took precedence of'; literally, 'dipped the heels of.' The incident related in Gen. 24.27 is cited here as an example, not of Israel's weakness, but of God's favour for his own people.

<sup>2</sup> The meaning of these verses 7 and 8 is obscure, and much disputed.

<sup>3</sup> That is, when the Tabernacle of Appointment went with Israel through the desert. Cf. possibly, the same may be so in the days of solemn observance, i.e., the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23.34).

<sup>4</sup> The Latin version here has 'And I will no longer'; but a reference to the past seems out of place here.

<sup>5</sup> The language of this verse is strained, and the sense doubtful; some think there is allusion to the manuscript. The Hebrew for 'mine-heaps' is *gullim*, and there is possibly a play upon words.

<sup>6</sup> Little can be said for certain about these verses, except that three editors are wrong who would join verse 10 after verse 9, and verse 17 after verse 16. Evidently they must be taken together, but it is hard to see the force of their various parallelisms; possibly there is an allusion to Assyria and Egypt as places of exile, cf. 11.15.

## CHAPTER 13

SUPPOSE Ephraim,<sup>1</sup> all Israel crumbled at his word; how did come they,  
 O the host's worship, to banish away life itself? And they are busy yet  
 over their drinking; each draws silver of theirs to fashion models of yonder  
 images, craftsmen copying craftsmen's design! And of such models they  
 say, The man who would do neither has but to kiss these calves.<sup>2</sup> Fades  
 the memory of them, light as early mist or morning dew, light as chaff  
 as the thrashing-floor, waste from the chimney, when high blows the wind!

And all the while I am the Lord thy God<sup>3</sup> . . . from the land of Egypt,  
 O God thou shalt own no other, other deliverance is none; out to the desert,  
 out to the pastured wastes, owned I then. Fatal parturing! With food  
 came satiety, and with satiety pride, and with pride forgetfulness of me!  
 Now their way lies to Assyria, and on that road I will meet them again,  
 their money now, wishful as lion or leopard; bear robbed of its young  
 should not thy open breast more cruelly, lion-dewer more greedily;  
 they shall be a prey, now, to the wild beasts.

Aha, Israel, undone! Who but I can aid thee? Thy king, where is he?  
 Now, if any, from end to end of thee thou hast none need of king and  
 a prince both; king and court thou didst demand of me, and gift of mine  
 was never so grudgingly made, so ungratefully withdrawn.

Trust me, it is stored away, it is jealously preserved, the sword of  
 Ephraim's slaying. Pangs like the pangs of travail shall come upon him;  
 or say he is false ill-guided, that shall thrive never when it comes to the  
 birth.<sup>4</sup>

From the grave's power to rescue them, from death to ransom them,  
 I, death's mortal enemy, I, corruption's undoing!

<sup>1</sup> 'Ephraim' is here the wife of that name (in which Jerusalem I believed),  
 not, as elsewhere, a synonym for the twelve tribes in general.

<sup>2</sup> The Latin version gives no satisfactory sense in the last clause; it translates,  
 'kiss thee, O man that worship calves,' or possibly, 'kiss thee now, you that wor-  
 ship calves.'

<sup>3</sup> After 'the Lord thy God' the Septuagint Greek has 'that holds heaven in  
 place and is earth's Creator, whose hands made all the host of heaven.' Whence  
 thou hast come thou art to follow such worship; I it was that rescued thee . . .

<sup>4</sup> The metaphor here is confused, and the double of it cannot be disentangled  
 with certainty.

<sup>5</sup> Literally, 'I will free them from the hand of the grave, I will ransom them  
 from death, O death, I will be thy plagues, O grave, I will be thy destroying.'  
 But every edition reads the first part of this as a question, inserting a comma, and  
 treating the second part, 'Come, death, where are thou plagues of mine?'  
 'Where is the destroying power of mine, corruption?' as if Almighty God was

May! My eyes are closed to its tears, that now have a share among its  
their brethren, shall find the Lord's vengeance, a burning desert wind that  
shall dry up their brooks, seal their springs, lay waste the over-borne  
where they heard their wailing.

## CHAPTER 14

**D**EATH in Samaria, that has provided her God's anger! Death is the  
smother's pain; children dashed headlong, slipped upon the mould!

Come back, Israel, to the Lord thy God; it is in this that has caused thy  
overthrow. Come back, man of Israel, with a plea ready on your lips:  
Pardon all our guilt, and take the host we have in return; the graven we  
utter shall be our victims now. No longer we will find refuge in Assyria;  
help, deliver our men on horses from Egypt; no longer will we give the  
name of gods to the things our own hands have made; thou art the friend  
of the friendless who tries to flee.

I will bring healing to their crushed spirits;<sup>1</sup> in firm mercy I will give  
them back my love; my vengeance has passed them by. I will be sowing  
seed, to make Israel grow as the lilac grows, taller roots deep in the forest  
of Lebanon. These branches shall spread, it shall become fair as the  
olive, fragrant as Lebanon cedar. Men that dwell under the protection  
of their name but shall come back to me; corn shall be thine in plenty,  
and they will grow like one of their own vineyards, fatted as the vintage  
of Lebanon itself. The false gods of Ephraim are forgotten, mine to  
answer his prayer and send him, ever-green as a fir-tree, have me all thy  
increase coasts. All this the wise discern, the thoughtful understand;  
straight paths the Lord has shown us for his friends to walk in; who  
know them shall ascribe to his rule.

rolling on his answers to small repentant Israel. The Septuagint Greek has  
"where," instead of "I will be," and a maintenance of its language is to be found  
in 1 Cor. 13:12.

<sup>1</sup> "Take the host we have in return," literally, "take good," that is, perhaps, the  
prison mentioned in the following clause; the phrase is unusual.

<sup>2</sup> "From Egypt" is not required in the original, but is almost certainly intended,  
cf. No. 34:1.

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew text has here, as in Jer. 3:22, "their apostasy."

## THE PROPHECY OF JOEL

### CHAPTER I

THIS message came from the Lord to Joel, the son of Phethai.

- 1 **Chide me, horn and horn, ruler and commander alike!** Tell me, what  
happenings are these, in your days and in your fathers' days unwatched.  
2 **Is not your man made hard on to your children, and they to their, and**  
3 **driven to a flesh promise you?** That locusts, bred upon bread of them,  
do ravage younger manhoods, summer devouring what Spoken, Rain-  
4 all what Gave-all has left? Weep they and wail, the ripples that must  
be even at their steps, for the sweet wine they drink, and shall drink no more!
- 5 **Alas, my country, how valiant an enemy is this, in number past all**  
counting, that comes to invade thee; like not thou's whip has work can  
6 **goad so pitilessly.** Spilled thy vineyards lie, stripped of the very bark thy  
7 **fig-trees, burnt and bleached and ruinous every bough.** Weep bitterly,  
8 **thou, as would that goes dead in sackcloth, vainly wisdomed, in the**  
9 **Lord's house, bread nor wine is offered now; for the priests, the Lord's**  
10 **own ministers, no office upon his name.** Desolate the land lies, every  
11 **field forlorn; crops reaped, the vine delivery, renegeous the oil.** Alas,  
12 **for husbandman's labour lost, the vintage-time turned to lament!** Alas  
13 **for harvest perished, for vintage withered, and dropping fig-tree**  
14 **Pomegranate, and palm, and apple, no tree in the wood but feels them**  
15 **what wonder! this not joy Girded in human hearts?**
- 16 **Moans, plants, and latests in ministered grief go about your work of**  
the altar; ministers of God, to his presence beside you, and there, in  
17 **sackcloth, keep vigil your God's house, that offering of bread and wine**  
18 **has word.** Then proclaim a fast, assemble the folk together, ruler and  
19 **commander alike masses in the temple, and there for the Lord's help cry**  
20 **heartily.** Wee weeps on this day! The day of the Lord is coming; his day  
21 **is darkness, his day doom.** Once when we stand, in the temple of our God,  
22 **the flesh there abolished, all the uncounted, all the rejoicing!** Then  
23 **on dung-heap now; ruin-wall gaps, and over-tower lies in ruin, the hope**  
24 **of harvest gone; echoes byre with howling of bewildered cattle, the**

1 The Lord here mentions four destructive agencies—the caterpillar, two kinds of locust, and the flying. The Hebrew text is ordinarily understood as giving four different kinds of locust, or four different names for the locust. It is impossible to say with certainty whether the prophet, from 2.4 to 2.17, is describing a locust invasion under the metaphor of a locust-swarm, or a locust-swarm under the metaphor of a locust invasion.



pasture have gone; even the fields dwindle. What help, Lord, but thine? <sup>2</sup> Parched are the upland meadows, every tree scorched in the forest; so is there even the wild beasts make their dumb appeal, from dry river-beds, from upland pastures laid bare.

## CHAPTER 2

**T**HIS trumpet, then, is blown! On yonder mountain-height, my sanctuary, sound the alarm! Tremble, fellow-countrymen, one and all: the day of the Lord is coming, coming so soon. Day of gloom and darkness, day of cloud and storm; spread out, like dawn over the hills, this great, this valiant army; never was the like since time began, never shall be, while the ages run their course. Five running proudly before them, <sup>1</sup> and a train of flame behind; in front, a band that could march faster for lowliness, and where they have passed, nothing but a desert waste, except from them is rest. Name me horrors so terrible of aspect, so speedy <sup>2</sup> in advance; hark to the noise of them, as they spare the hill-slopes! Din of chariot is not so loud, nor crackling of flames that feed on stubble; <sup>3</sup> a valiant army, all arrayed for battle! What wonder if whole nations are grieved at their coming, everywhere pale checked? <sup>4</sup> Bravely they hasten to the attack, warrior-like scale the wall; unmoving they press on, never <sup>5</sup> one joining with another, so well keeps each one his course; storm the loop-hole! <sup>6</sup> subvert, and now, the city breached, mount wall, climb battlement, enter by windows, the chief's map.

Before that army, quakes earth, and heavens rock; dark grow sun and moon, and the stars withhold their radiation; with his own voice the Lord <sup>7</sup> berids its coming. Wide it stretches, that host of the Lord, valiant it is, and ever ready to do his will. O great, O terrible day of the Lord, who shall find strength to bear it?

Thus now, the Lord says, to turn the whole host of your hearts back to me, with fasting and with mourners' tears. It is your beauty, not the garments you wear, that must be my wonder. Come back to the Lord your God; he is ever gracious and merciful, ever patient and rich in pardon; therefore he delays, even now he is ready to forgive. Who knows <sup>8</sup> but he will relent, and be appeased; cut one glance behind him, and, enough for his own due of blood and wine-offering, spare to forgive you!

The trumpet, then, is blown! Here is fasting proclaimed;<sup>9</sup> the silence is

<sup>1</sup> See note on Joshua 2.10.

<sup>2</sup> 'Storm the loop-hole! Bravely, 'till through windows,' but the Hebrew verb means, 'till (or plunge) among weapons.'

<sup>3</sup> Chronologically (if the first is second) verses 17-19 imply a command; dramatically (as verses 18 and 19 show) they imply that the command has been carried out.

14 assembled; the folk summoned, the dancing-rites performed, the elders  
 15 met, wrangling must be there and talks unceasing, guests leave his  
 16 chamber and bride her home. Mark how the priests, that wait upon the  
 Lord, make lament between porch and altar, crying aloud: Spare thy  
 people, Lord, spare them; thy chosen people, do not put them to the  
 shame of obeying heathen masters! Will thou let the Gentiles ask, What  
 has become of their God?

17 People of a land well loved, be spared no yet. His answer comes, There  
 is ruin and woe and all to your hearts' content; no more will I let the  
 18 nations mock you. For he shall be driven from your lands, the northern  
 invader; not in the trackless desert he shall lie, vanguard to nations, rear-  
 guard to western sea, and nothing more shall avail you his march and  
 19 attack of him, this enemy that did so wondrously. Fear no more, land of  
 20 Israel; in the Lord's wondrous doings triumph and rejoice! Fear no  
 more, hearts that roam the wasteryside; grass grows on the upland  
 meadows! There is fruit on the trees again; vine and fig-tree cast forth so  
 21 liberally. Rejoice, men of Sion, and triumph in the Lord your God; proof  
 he gives you of your restoration to favour,<sup>1</sup> making the winter and the  
 22 spring rains fall, as in time past. Now the threshing-floor shall be piled  
 23 with wheat, and the presses overflow with wine and oil. Foulness years,  
 when the locust ravaged you, Grass-eat and Fruit-eat and Spoiler, they  
 24 shall be made good. But you shall to your hearts' content, praising the  
 name of the Lord your God for his wondrous protection, never again  
 25 shall hearts go away disappointed. I will make myself known among you,  
 I, the Lord your God, who alone am God; Israel chased of their hope  
 never again!

26 And afterwards! Afterwards I will pour out my spirit upon all man-  
 kind, and your sons and daughters will be prophets. Your old men shall  
 27 dream dreams, and your young men see visions, everywhere servants  
 28 of mine, bondsmen of mine, inspired to prophesy! I will show wonders  
 29 in heaven, and on earth blood, and fire, and whirling smoke. The sun  
 will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the day of  
 30 the Lord comes, the great, the terrible day. And never a soul shall call  
 on the Lord's name but shall find deliverance; here on mount Sion, here  
 in Jerusalem there shall be refuge for a remnant, a remnant of the Lord's  
 own summoning, there shall be deliverance at last.

<sup>1</sup> 'Proof of your restoration to favour', literally, 'a teacher of justice.' Some would understand the Hebrew text as meaning, 'without rain or (goodness) the restoration of your borders.' But it almost seems as if the prophet had made a deliberate play upon words: 'He gives you a shower of (the sign of) restoration, makes the winter shorter and the spring rain fall.'

## CHAPTER 3

**P**ERILOUS these times shall be, when the hour has come for revenging  
 my sinners against Judah and Jerusalem. I see the valley of Joseph: I  
 will bend the broken folk, sea and all, and these hold avenge even things  
 for the wrong they did to my people, to Israel, my own domain. People  
 of mine they scattered through the world, land of mine they parcelled out  
 between them. Mine they be awarded by lot, much captives, and then  
 sold cheap, top-slave for a hater's hire, gill-slave for the drinking of a  
 wine-drink! What, would you chaffer with me, men of Tyre and Sidon,  
 men from the ports of Philistia? Must there be barter and exchange  
 between us? Nay, if you will have exchanges with me, look to it that the  
 reward does not fall on your own hands, swift and sudden! Would you  
 carry off silver of mine and gold, lay up the choicest of my treasure in  
 your temples? Citizens of Jerusalem, men of Judah's breed, would you  
 sell them to Girdian masters, far away from their homes? But if I do not  
 ransom them back from exile that was of your contriving, and, for that  
 service done, pay you to your own color; make one son and daughter of a  
 parent to these same folk of Judah, slaves they can barter at will to the  
 severest Sabeans; I, the Lord, have decreed it.

Cry it in the nations, they should do sacrifice and murder their tried  
 warriors for barter; ruly they, much they, all that bear arms. Though  
 I have bent into exile, made into sparey working is none but none  
 smother up his maddened nose! To arms, to the reader-vex, nations all  
 about; down of the Lord awaits you, warriors all. Up, up, to Joseph's  
 valley bend you; here, upon all neighbouring peoples, I will hold avenge.  
 The quate, these! Harvest is ripe already. Down to the vineyard with you!  
 Are not the vats full, the presses overflowing? Has it not come to a head,  
 the measure of their wickedness!

Thronging, thronging they come, in your valley to my their dwelling,  
 appointed trying-place of a divine suit; dark grew sun and moon, is  
 light of the sun is none. Loud as roaring of lion speaks the Lord in  
 thunder from his closet at Jerusalem, till heaven and earth quake at the  
 sound. To his own people, the sons of Israel, refuge he is and strong  
 hold; doubt you shall have none thenceforward that I, the Lord your  
 God, have my dwelling-place at Jerusalem; a holy city Jerusalem shall  
 be, never again shall alien for breach the walls of her.

Drop now with rain wise the mountain slopes, bathed in milk the up-  
 land.

\* The interpretation of this verse is doubtful in our language; along the general  
 sense is evidently that Almighty God demands to be indemnified for the loss  
 he is adjudged as having suffered when his people were sold as slaves.

head pastures; never a stream in all Juda has been full and strong. What fountain is this that issues out from the Lord's temple, and waters the dry valley of Sion? A lonely ruin Egypt shall be, and Eden a desert waste; here was great wrong done to Jewry's people, here unnumbered as lives were taken. For Juda, the Jerusalem, there shall be peace undisturbed, long as time shall last; for them, guilt of blood that were still unpurged shall be purged now; here, in Sion, the Lord will have his dwelling-place.

## THE PROPHECY OF AMOS

### CHAPTER 1

**H**ERE tells Amos, one of the shepherd folk at Thebez, what visions he had concerning Israel. In Judea, Ozias was then reigning, in Israel, Jeroboam son of Joas, and it was two years before the earthquake. Lord as roaring of lion, said he, the Lord will speak in thunder from his citadel at Jerusalem; forasmuch they lie, yonder pasture the shepherds Israel's oxen, the heights of Carmel all shattered away.

A message from the Lord: Thrice shall Damascus, and shall once again,<sup>1</sup> tharode rough-shod over the men of Gilead;<sup>2</sup> fall fire on Amos's coast, to burn down all the strongholds of Benadab! Eodem Damascus's gate shall be, nor any be left to dwell in Amos's plain, or rule over Eden valley; far off, as Cil,<sup>3</sup> the Syrian folk shall go into banishment, the Lord says.

This, too: Thrice shall Gaza, and shall once again, that secured for the men of Edom their full toll of captives;<sup>4</sup> fall fire on Gaza's walls, to burn down all its strongholds! None shall dwell in Accaron, none rule over Accaron; upon Accaron, too, my stroke shall fall; every trace of Philistia vanished and gone, the Lord God says.

This too: Thrice shall Tyre, and shall once again, that gave Edom its full toll of captives, as though bond that were close between brethren; fall fire on its walls, to burn down its strongholds!

This too: Thrice shall Edom, and shall once again, that would hurt down his own brother at the sword's point; unmerciful cruelty, so to beg his enemy, nay even let manure die down, fall fire on Thebes, to burn down the strongholds of Israel.

This, too: Thrice shall Amos, and shall once again, that to us

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'For three winters of Damascus, and for four, I will not bring it back.' The verb is perfectly explained: 'I will not restore Damascus to prosperity,' 'I will not recall the sentence I have pronounced,' etc.

<sup>2</sup> Tharode rough-shod over the men of Gilead; literally, 'shredded Gilead with iron shodhoes.'

<sup>3</sup> The location of Cil is unknown, but the Latin version can hardly be right in identifying it as Cyprus.

<sup>4</sup> Here and in Verse 2, it is usually explained that from the Philistines then the Phoenicians, invaded Israel, and sold the prisoners they took to the Edomites. For such a notion is both historically and geographically impossible. It seems much simpler to understand that the Edomites invaded Israel (see verse 11) from the south-west, and within the Philistines on the south-west was the Phoenicians on the north-west would allow Israelites refugees to cross their frontiers. This would be identical to Hebrew idiom as 'bearing up Israel into the hands of the Edomites.' Cf. *ibid.* 12.

14 covered Goliath's head, every mother's wish he would slip open; the  
 15 fall on Rahab's walls, to burn down its stronghold! Hark to the howl of  
 16 Goliath, humming of the storm-wind! How could Naboth's<sup>1</sup> stall go, with  
 17 all his calves.

## CHAPTER 2

1 **T**HIS, too: Thrice fustle Moab, and fustle once again, that burned  
 2 the king of Edom's house to dust;<sup>2</sup> fall fire on Moab, to burn down  
 3 all the strongholds of Canaan! With tumult and the howl of tempest,  
 4 Moab shall go to his death; ruler of them I will smite down in their  
 5 midst, and all his wealth shall perish with him, the Lord says.

6 This, too: Thrice fustle Jude, and fustle once again, that spurned  
 7 the Lord's law and left his bidding undone, so cursed were they by the  
 8 false gods their fathers had gone a-courting; fire fall on Jude, to burn  
 9 down all the strongholds of Jerusalem!

10 And this, too: What of Israel? Thrice fustle Israel like the rest, and  
 11 fustle once again, that for a debt, though it were but the price of a pair  
 12 of shoes, will make slaves of poor, honest folk. Ground in the dust, the  
 13 poor man's rights, shouldered aside, the claim of the unfashioned! See  
 14 a wharf father and son, to my sister's dishonour, bed with one maid! See  
 15 where they lie flaring beside the altar, at the very shrine of their God,  
 16 no cloak there but in some borrower's pledge, no group of wine but in  
 17 some debtor's forfeit!

18 Was it for such men as these I annihilated the Amorrites, a race  
 19 tall as the cedar, hardy as the oak, now and fruit of them designed to  
 20 destruction? These are the men I rescued from Egypt, guided them, all  
 21 those forty years, through the wilderness, to make the domain of the  
 22 Amorrites theirs! Tell me, men of Israel, the Lord says, what made it  
 23 that I should call you of yours, from their heathen's days, to serve me  
 24 as prophets and Nazirites? Give you tempt the Nazirites with wine, ever  
 25 as you forbid the prophet to raise his voice in prophecy. Henceforth, you  
 26 shall seek my help in vain; waggon-wheels overladen with sheaves grown  
 27 as tall as cedars as I! Speed shall be no profit to the speedy, strength to  
 28 the strong, warlike shall not escape, nor bowman stand firm; foot of foot  
 29 and well-mounted horseman shall have no deliverance; a day is coming,

<sup>1</sup> For 'Naboth's' the Hebrew text, probably by an error, reads 'their king.'

<sup>2</sup> It seems unlikely that the word 'burned the king of Edom's house to dust' represent what the prophet wrote. Nowhere else in the Old Testament is one burned, never represented for his conduct in another's warfare else in connection treated as an execution. And the destruction of the Edomites in 1412 does not present us for a sympathetic reference to them.

the Lord says, when told neither shall he fail to throw arms away, and take flight.

## CHAPTER 3

**T**HIS, then, is the Lord's message to you, men of Israel, in the whole land: since I rescued you from Egypt: Nation is none I have claimed for my own, save you; and guilt of yours is none that shall go unpunished.

Tryst there must be, if friends will meet and journey together; prey there must be, ere lion will rise in the forest, lion's whelp growl in its lair; bird is not placed to the ground, without Fowler to snare it, nor stag released without a catch made. Sounds trumpet in the streets, men do well to be afraid; if peril is afoot in the city, doubt not it is of the Lord's sending. Never does he err, but his servants, the prophets, are in the secret. Reem lion, who but will maul? Come the divine warning, who but will prophesy?<sup>1</sup>

Raise a cry from the house, says, there is Azazel, there is Egypt's hand: To the hills about Samaria harken you, and look deep into the heart of her, what mischief doings are there, what wrongs men suffer! In ponder patterns, the Lord says, that are cross-beams of oppression and rapine, harken doing is all forget. This does, then, the Lord God utter: Discreet and deep for such a land as this! All thy fastnesses shall be dismantled, all thy palaces spoiled. With thee have thou dragged his people: Fleeed enough the shepherd, if a pair of horns be severed, a mangled ox! They shall fare no better, the landlads that lie on a corner of the quarters at Samaria, and have their bed at Damascus? A message for you, says the Lord, the God of hosts, a warning for the men of Israel: I will have a reckoning with the rebellious of Israel, a reckoning with those that of their as Bethel, that shall have the horns of them cut off and hinged to the ground: on summer dwelling of yours and winter dwelling my hand is laid; houses of ivory and houses of the summer folk, all shall lie in ruin, the Lord says.

<sup>1</sup> The meaning of this difficult passage seems to be that there is no sinner without first the inner indignation already experienced by Samaria (2.5-10) and that good then it has incurred God's anger, and worse calamity is to follow.

<sup>2</sup> The instruction is not clear, perhaps a general warning against luxury is intended (cf. verse 15). But this seems to be the natural meaning of a message that has produced a wide variety of interpretations. It runs, literally: 'So shall the sins of Israel be dragged out, that dwell in Samaria in the midst of a bed, and in Damascus . . . a couch.' There is no evidence that the stuff called 'damask' was having, or was so called, in Amos' time.

## CHAPTER 4

**H**ERE is word for you, prospered cattle that dwell at Samaria, the poor wronging, the friendship kille sparing, and ever crying out upon your husbands, Wile, there! We would drink! Never let me be called holy, the Lord God says, if doom does not overtake you for this; see if you be not trussed as spears, and your children given up to food the eating-pot? Leave the city with you men, the Lord says, out by this breach, out by that, and be cast away in Arnon.

Do with you to Rachel, and defy me, chosen to Galgal, and again defiance shows morning visitors, rises on the third day, bread, increased bread, for thank-offering, gifts of Arnon publicly proclaimed? Have you will, men of Israel, says the Lord God, have your will.

What would you? Never a day left but men's souls were idle, never a village but bread lacked there, and you would not come back to me, the Lord says. It was these months to harvest, and rain I denied you, or rain fell on one day, and not on the next, one village had a drenching and the next was dry, all one city could supply water for three neighbours, and water had none, and you would not come back to me. You would not come back to me, the Lord says, when snow I sent, and mildew, and the locust preyed on garden and vineyard, fig and olive-tree of yours; you would not come back to me, when with Egypt's pestilence<sup>1</sup> I slew you, when your mangers full at the reaper's point, and your barns were mired off, and never a camp of yours but the stench of it plagued your nostrils; you would not come back to me, when rain descended, with as the divine stroke that melted Sodom and Gomorrah, and you yourselves were like a brand smelt from the burning.

Now I have words, Israel, in name for thee<sup>2</sup> when that word comes, prepare thou men, Israel, to meet thy God. He is here, that fashioned the hills and made the winds; he is here, that gives men warning of his designs, that come down into darkness, and sets his foot on the highest heights of earth; he, the God of Israel, is the name of him.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'They shall lift you up as pots on, spurn', and that which you have behind you, that which is left of you is trampling you.' We might compare Ex. 15-2, or possibly Is. 31-3, that the coming of the Hebrews was a probably disaster 'he will lead you away with hooks, with hooked spears such as Sennacherib was, all that is left of you.'

<sup>2</sup> See Is. 33-35.

<sup>3</sup> See Deut. 32-35, 38-40.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'I will declare thee,' the sense of the punishment being left vague, as in the occasion Isaiah, 'May the Lord do to me [that is, punish me] thus and more than thus.'



## CHAPTER 5

**P**LKASE you that listen to the songs I raise for you, men of Israel: <sup>1</sup> *Perish she is, never to rise again, Israel, the nation that smothered a full laugh she lies since founded! Ay, the Lord God says, but a branch of a cedar, but ten villages built to you, city that marched out a thousand, village a hundred strong!*

You warned the Lord gave to the race of Israel: On peril of your lives, <sup>2</sup> to my aid betake you! Not to Bethel, not to Gilgal's ring-shrine, or a Berobee pilgrimage; a long road yonder circle shall lead you, a road that never returns, house of God shall not avail you, that is house of idols now! On your lives, to the Lord betake you, as you would not see all <sup>3</sup> Joseph's shame, quenchers fire raging over Bethel! And will you poison the springs of justice, still in the dust fling heaven's soap.

... <sup>4</sup> *Whence he of Acetarus and Orion, drives brings he out of darkness, and turns night to day, beckons to the waves of the sea, and o'er the surface of earth spreads them, laid his name! At his glance hills roll on the strong, demolition on the stronghold.*

It looks he will care at yonder city gate, that feeds feasts; the wine press, is there, is a thing abominable. Yet, trust me, it shall cooking avail you, is this harrying of the poor, and taking toll of the best they have. *Flowers of sin* you build you shall never dwell in, many vineyards you plant you shall drink of never. Your often misdoing, your betwixt galls, never is thick I am wiled to it; innocence lured, the bribe takes, the poor refused their right at the pilgrimage-seat! And should wisdom keep silence in <sup>5</sup> times like these, *is times like these?* Set your minds on right, that now is set on wrong-doing; so you shall find life, so your house shall come true that the Lord, the God of hosts, is with you. Then wrong, cherish is the right, justice refuse at your pilgrimage-seat; then there is hope that the Lord, the God of hosts, will have mercy on some remnant of Joseph's line.

This done, he cries, he, the Lord of hosts, he, our Master: *Markets in place or street is none but shall echo with wailing and cries of woe; country-folk, and such as are skilled to mourning, they shall call in to make dirge and dirge!* <sup>6</sup> *Dirge, too, the vineyards shall sing, all this, when it*

<sup>1</sup> Both grammar and logic seem to demand that some thought should be supplied here, which our existing manuscripts do not express.

<sup>2</sup> This sentence may be read either as a statement or as a question; if it is a statement, no satisfactory answer of it has yet been devised.

<sup>3</sup> At the end of this verse, the Latin seems to be a correction of a text entirely

- 11 I make my way through your night, the Lord says. Froth, that well  
 eagerly for the day of the Lord's coming! Think you it shall serve your  
 need? Nay, it is the Lord's day of triumph, not yours; dawn it must, but  
 12 in darkness, not in light. Speeds he well, that shares him and more bread?  
 Was he joy of his home-coming, that leans back on wall, and all at once  
 13 is bitten by a viper? And for you, that day brings darkness, not the light  
 you craved for; no radiant haunts about it, only gloom.  
 14 Oh, but I am sick and tired of them, your solemn faces, images that  
 15 you set up from your assemblies I can breathe no longer! Burnt-offerings  
 still? Bloodless offerings still? Nay, I will have none of them; let be the  
 16 victims you lay in welcome, I care not. O to be rid of the singing, the  
 harp's music, that dies my ear!  
 17 . . . And like waters rolling in full tide, like a perennial stream, right and  
 justice shall abound . . .  
 18 What, men of Israel, did you spend forty years in the desert, ever for  
 19 me your burnt sacrifices, ever for me your offerings: and now would you  
 burn Moloch for your king, a man for your god, carry shrine of thieves,  
 20 idolatrous image: you made of them, kithar and chithar?<sup>1</sup> What wonder  
 if I banish you beyond Damascus the wretch? Deceives you with his own  
 sign-charm the Lord, the God of hosts.

## CHAPTER 6

- P**ROPH Froth, that in Zion or high Sennar take your ease, and fling  
 nothing! That lord it over the Gentiles, and pass proudly through  
 1 Israel's domains, bidding us make our way to Chalane, and thence to  
 noble Emath, or go down to Gath, where the Philistines are, and use if  
 2 land of theirs be fairer, border of theirs be wicker, than these of ours.  
 3 Four kith, with the evil day over at sun's length, wrong released ever

light in the Hittites, but it may be questioned whether the corruption does not  
 go deeper.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'And took up (or, will take up) Siccote for the teacher your king  
 (or, of Moloch), and Chas (or, the image, or, the pedestal) of your images, the  
 hat of your god (or, gods), which you made for them.' The meaning of the  
 sentence has been much disputed, and the general reference to Israel's idolatrous  
 habits in *Is. 46.1-7* does not help to clear up the difficulty. Many suggest a  
 reference to the Assyrian worship of the planet Saturn but it should be observed  
 that Anon does not, as a rule, use the Israelites with worshipping false gods,  
 rather with an idolatrous and unspiritual approach to their own religion. It is not  
 improbable that the text has suffered from an early corruption, like the beginning  
 of chapter 8.

close at hand!<sup>1</sup> Sleep they on beds of ivory, spread they at tables, eating  
the best lands fork our provide, calves fattened at the stall; and ever  
meet harp and voice nicely accord, ay, very David's they think them-  
selves for musical invention! All their drinking is from the bowl, all their  
clarionets of the best, and what care they for Joseph's ruin?

Loed their folk they shall, but soon shall the revel must break up at  
last. By my divine power I reveal it, says the Lord God of hosts, pride of  
yours shall weary me, great houses of yours shall offend my sight, no  
longer dry and cracked, I will leave you at the enemy's mercy. In those  
no men left alive in a house, deeds shall take toll of them . . .<sup>2</sup>

... Kinsmen that come to take him away must turn him first, and so to  
carry his bones without. No, shall' take he to one that hails to the inner  
rooms, has thou any left? And when he hears the tale is one, bids him  
say no more, unless it be to call the Lord's name to memory.<sup>3</sup> . . .

A mood from the Lord, and all shall be a gaping ruin, palace and co-  
ted tape beds. Strange, if yonder mountain crags men should climb on home-  
lock, or plough with ass?<sup>4</sup> Stranger still, that people of mine should  
poison the springs of right and justice, all stemmed new! And will  
you boast ever some conquest of this world?<sup>5</sup> To what greatness, you  
say, valour of ours has brought us? Trust me, men of Israel, the Lord is  
God of hosts says, I mean to confound you with such an enemy as shall

<sup>1</sup> The language of the Hebrew text is continually fixed all through verses 1-3, and it is difficult to find certain that manuscript variants have not introduced words in. Verse 1 must be taken as the ultimate, not of the prophet, but of the textual Samaritan legend; otherwise the logic of the passage is wholly obscure. For the retention of this of the text is rightly preserved of. I.e. the only other three spring beds in the whole body of 7, is below.

<sup>2</sup> These seem to be a gap, both in grammar and in logic, at the end of this sentence, which suggests a manuscript variation e.g. the omission of the number ten would be more readily intelligible if the text ran, 'In those no men left alive in a house, none of them shall die.' We should expect also to hear what kind of danger (perhaps death) they had escaped, to fall into some other danger, perhaps that of perdition. If a reference to plague has dropped out, it would explain the allusion to burning in verse 4; the Israelites did not ordinarily burn their dead.

<sup>3</sup> The exact meaning of this word passage escapes us, perhaps because the true context of it has not been preserved. 'Say no more, unless it be to call the Lord's name to memory' is the LXX version, and the Hebrew text very much, 'Hark! No maintenance be made of the Lord's name.' But no plausible reason has been suggested for such a change nor that it appears that there was any immediate change of the divine name being introduced into the conversation.

<sup>4</sup> By a very slight change in the Hebrew text it is possible to get the reading, 'no plough the sea with ass.'

<sup>5</sup> 'Oh little world' or possibly, 'Oh Lebanon' a place-name (II Kg. 2.2). The prophet may intend a play upon words, as we might upon the name 'Licheworth.'

<sup>6</sup> Literally, 'What we not by our own strength taken in our own hand?' The Hebrew word for learn, *qananta*, was also a place-name (I Mac. 1.28).

crush the life out of you, from Beersheba past to the brook that bounds the desert.

## CHAPTER 7

- THIS was a vision the Lord God showed me; here were locusts swarming, just at the time when the aftergrowth was coming up, after the king's crop had been carried. Short work had been made of all the land yielding; Ah, Lord God, said I, be merciful! How should Jacob survive, the great creature he is? And with that, the Lord rebuked: Happen it shall not, said he. And a second vision the Lord God showed me, here he would smother them to crush by fire; fire should devour the waters below the earth, and consumed some part of them were. Ah, Lord God, said I, for pity! How should Jacob survive, the great creature he is? And with that, the Lord rebuked again; Happen it shall not, said he.
- But now the Lord showed me a third vision, a plastered wall, and the Lord himself standing by it with a crowd<sup>1</sup> in his hand, asking me if I could see what he had there. Oh yes, Lord, I said, a plasterer's work! Ay, he answered, and here, in full view of Israel's folk, that crowd I lay aside, commanding they shall have from me no more. Hill-distances of Amos<sup>2</sup> shall tumble down, mountains of Israel be laid waste; at the crowd's point I will try conclusions with the race of Jacobsons.
- Hereupon, a message came to Jacobsons, king of Israel, from Amaziah that was potent at Bethel. Here in Amos, said he, raising voice against thee in the midst of Israel; there is no room in all the land for your talk as this; Jacobsons to die at the wood's point, Israel to be banished from his native country! And this was his command to Amos, Sir prophet, get thee gone; in Jacob rule refuge if thou wilt, and there earn thy living by prophesy. Prophecy here in Bethel thou mayest not, where the king's chapel is, and the king's court.

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew word rendered in the Latin by "crowd" more probably means a *plaster-line*, which Almighty God threatens to apply against Israel; that is, he will proceed actively against them, to wall out past over their wall any more (cf. Is., where the same word is used).

<sup>2</sup> The Latin version gives "hill-distances of Amos" (i.e. the hills); exactly as in Ch. 1.11 (cf. Am. 1.2). In some editions a given "Bethel" (i.e. House of the Lord), exactly as in Ch. 4.12, 14, 15. Our present Hebrew text gives "hill-distances of Israel" and "house of Israel"; it is supported by the Septuagint Greek (perhaps, however, transcribing the word as "laughers"); this, too, was St Jerome's reading. It almost looks as if there had been some early scribbles in the manuscript, due perhaps to unexpensive abbreviation, or a scribe's care, to write down some name connected with the last word (like "Bethel"). It may be pointed out that "house of Israel" is a phrase nowhere else used—it would normally include Edom—and that Israel is never mentioned by the prophet, except in Jer. 22.26.

What, said Amos, I a prophet? Nay, not that, nor a prophet's son; neither; I am one that minds cattle, one that rides the yowlswe-down; I was but tending sheep when the Lord took me into his service. It was the Lord bade me go and prophesy to his people of Israel. He has a message for thee: They will have no prophesying against Israel, no word dropped against Bethaven? Here, then, is the divine doom pronounced on thee: Wives of thine, here in the city streets, shall be dishonoured; sons and daughters of thine shall die at the sword's point; lands of thine shall feed the mowing-scythes. And for thyself, on unshowered soil death awaits thee, when Israel is banished, as banished it needs must be, from the land of its birth.

## CHAPTER 8

THEN the Lord God showed me another vision, of a hook<sup>1</sup> such as they use for fish-potting. And when he asked, could I see what he had there, Why, Lord, I said, a grappling-hook for fish-crowd? Ay, said he, and right aptness it is for my people of Israel; no further chance shall they have of repentance.

Day of doom! How stark the hinges of reader temple gates! then, what manacled everywhere deep silence falls!<sup>2</sup>

Here is word for you, oppressors of the poor, that bring ruin on your fellow citizens in their needs; you that long for new moons and sabbaths to be at an end, for tithing to begin and granary to be opened, so you may be at your shifts again, the scant measure, the high price, the false weight! You that for a sheaf, though it were but the price of a pale of sheaves, will make thrives of poor, honest folk; you that sell refuse for wheat! By Jacob's ancient renown the Lord swears it, crimes of yours shall remain for ever unexpunged. Well may the earth quake over such doings, to the heart of all that dwell in it; everywhere mount up, and shift, and shak, like Egypt's river in flood. Day of doom, says the Lord God, when there shall be sunset at noon, and earth shall be overshadowed under the full light! All your fasting turned to lament, all your songs to dirge and dole; not a loin but gone clad in sackcloth, not a head but is shaved bald; never was such mourning made, though it were for an only son; hence the day, hence its making.

A time is coming, says the Lord God, when there shall be great lack in the land, yet neither dearth nor drought. Hunger? Ay, they shall hunger for some message from the Lord, yet go they from east to a western sea, go they from north to south, making search for it every-

<sup>1</sup> 'A hook,' according to the Hebrew text, 'a basket.'

<sup>2</sup> The sense of this verse is uncertain, and a manuscript error seems probable.

16 where, manna from the Lord they shall have none. Thirst, ay, they  
 17 shall thirst, their maid and herve warlike both. Fools, that by the shape  
 of Sennaris take their mates, pin their faith to Daz's worship or Harnabon  
 pigmings! Here is fall there is no amending.

## CHAPTER 9

AND now I saw the Lord standing above the altar, Simas columns  
 1 there, he cried, blast these deludges, cast of ill-gotten gain! To the  
 best man, the sword must take its toll; refuge shall be none. Flew they,  
 2 never a fugitive shall escape: from the pit beneath I will dig them up,  
 3 from heaven above I will dig them down; hide they as Carmel's heights,  
 I will search and seize them, lurk they in the sea's depths, my wit runs  
 4 there; maw of monster shall devour them. Let evening drive them into  
 exile, even there the sword shall be my persecutor; watch and ward I  
 keep over them, never death is, but to their undoing.

5 . . . The Lord God of hosts, whose touch seals earth, to the heart of all  
 that dwell in it, makes it everywhere mount up and sink, like Egypt's  
 6 river in flood: his the arched railway of heaven, his the indred frame of  
 earth; hecks be to the waters of the sea, and over the earth spreads  
 them, Jere his name!

7 Echop or Harnabon, what saw I the Lord say. God that brought you  
 here from Egypt was God that brought the Philistines from Caphtan,  
 8 brought the Syrians from Ch<sup>9</sup>. Divine regard that watches over this  
 kingdom, marks over its guilt; I will blot it out, believe me, from the face  
 of the earth.

And blot out the name of Jacob altogether? Nay, not that, the Lord  
 9 says. At my command, the whole world shall be a slave, to sift the race  
 of Israel as corn is sifted in the sieve, and never a grain<sup>10</sup> cast out foot  
 10 on the bare ground; at the sword's point they shall die, all the guilty that  
 are found among my people; the guilty, who now flatter themselves that  
 11 evil shall never come near or nigh them. Thus, I mean to rebuild the  
 fallen dwelling-place of David, all its breaches made good, all its ruins  
 12 removed; it shall stand ever more as it stood long ago; empire it shall  
 13 have over the Eberites, and all the Gentile folk I claim for my own. A

<sup>9</sup> "Heart of ill-gotten gain"; the meaning of this phrase is very doubtful.

<sup>10</sup> The Latin version here gives Cappadocia for Caphtan, and Cyprus for Ch<sup>9</sup>, as elsewhere. The identification is by no means probable.

<sup>11</sup> "Never a grain"; the word used is of doubtful significance. But the meaning seems to be that all the Israelites will go into captivity, and this will be a sieve to separate the good from the worthless among them; some will escape, as a grain of corn might escape by being thrown carelessly over the sieve's edge.

time is coming, the Lord says, when pomegranates shall tread on the heels of reapers, women's soft legs as strangers' is ended; never a mountain-side but shall run with sweet wine, never a hill but its rugged surface shall be tamed.<sup>1</sup> I will bring back my people of Israel from the exile, to rebuild its ruined cities and dwell there, plant vineyards and drink of them, till gardens and eat the fruits of them. From now they shall rule in their native soil, never again to be torn away from the house I have given them, says the Lord, thy own God.

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<sup>1</sup> The rugged surface shall be tamed; literally, in the Latin version, 'it shall be cultivated'; in the Hebrew text, 'it shall rest.'

## THE PROPHECY OF ABIMAS

HERE follows the vision of Abimas. What does meet the Lord God  
 prostrate on Edom? What host is this has reached our ears, what  
 challenge has been sent abroad among the nations? Up, march we out to  
 engage him in battle? Sorry the lot I have given thee among the peoples  
 of the world, no better than a thing of contempt: yet, dwelling where  
 thou dost in the clefts of the rocks, thou art pulled up with pride; high  
 thou hast built thy throne, and thinkest there is none can drag thee down  
 to earth. Build thy cycle high as the eagle, nest, if thou wilt, among the  
 stars, I will yet drag thee down thence, the Lord says. Silence, the  
 silence that has fallen upon Edom! Thine was thy, midnight solitons,  
 that had isolated thee, at least they had been content to carry off what  
 needed thee, some gleanings at least these victors would have left thee!  
 But now, see how thou is ransacked, how all his treasury is rifled! See  
 how the very folk that are in league with thee drive thee back to thy own  
 frontier, thy own confederates playing thee false, pressing thee hard  
 stabbed from beneath by those companions of thy own? Thou art a fool  
 for thy pains.

- 9 Thy day of doom, the Lord says, when wise men shall be seen in Edom,  
 10 not any prudent counsellors on all thou's hill-sides, dismayed the warriors  
 of Teman shall be, all slaughter leaves all the mountains of Esau deso-  
 late. What wonder if hopes of thine come to nothing, name of thine perish  
 utterly, that didst send thy own brother, Jacob, with murderous wrong?  
 11 What thou findest the day when thou wastest abroad, while the enemy  
 disarmed his ranks, while alone thou wentest through yonder gaps, and  
 paraded our Jerusalem by her, thyself making common cause with them?  
 12 What, look on idly, when furnace turns against that brother of thine;  
 13 nay, triumph over Jude's fall, loath of his calamity? He overthrews, and  
 thou wouldst find thy way in at the gaps of my overthrow, he overthrews,  
 and thou wouldst rejoice at his discomfiture; he overthrews, and thou  
 14 wouldst offer him battle? Thou wouldst take up thy post in the breach,  
 and cut off the fugitive, but the way to the struggles, when all is lost?  
 15 Be sure of this, a time is soon coming when the Lord will ransack all  
 the nations to their essence; then, as thou didst, it shall be done to thee,  
 16 in thy own coin thou shalt be paid. The cup of vengeance give, my people,  
 have drunk, thou art the mountains which is my sanctuary, all the  
 heathen shall drink brotherward; drink, ye, drink deep, and fill thro  
 17 Surfeitness, as if they had never been. But here, no moment lingers, all

\* It seems probable that some of these early verses are a quotation from an earlier  
 prophecy, which is also cited by Jeremiah (xx, 9 and 14-15).



shall be deliverance, all shall be holiness, and their spoilers the men of Jacob shall despoil. A fire Jacob shall be, a living flame the sons of a Joseph, and Esau's race withble before their eyes, the spark once kindled, all shall be consumed, and of Esau's race no memory be left; the Lord decrees it.

Hill-country of Ephraim shall fall to the southern folk, and Philistia to the men of the plain; all that is Ephraim and Simeon now shall be theirs, and Galilee shall be made over to Benjamin. Warriors of Israel, beseiged so far away, shall hold all the Chanaanite lands. Scepters their northern frontier, men of Jerusalem, come back from the shores of Beelphegor to claim the cities of the north. No lack of champions Zion shall have, to do a justice on the mountains of Edom; and of their empire the Lord himself shall be sovereign ruler.

## THE PROPHECY OF JONAS

### CHAPTER I

THE Lord's voice came to Jonas, the son of Amathi: Up, and to the great city of Nineve make thy way, I would have thee preach to them; great guilt of their sins is thy commission. Rise up he did, but his thought was, he would escape to Tharsh, and there avoid the Lord's severity. So he made his way to Joppa, and there, sure enough, was a ship bound for Tharsh; passage-money was paid, and aboard went Jonas with the rest of them, willing for Tharsh to be out of the Lord's way.

But now the Lord sent out a hurricane wind over the sea, that raised a great tempest there, and the ship was like to have been broken all to pieces. Soon almost the mariners were, and loud they called upon their god, ay, and fell to throwing the tackle overboard, to lighten ship. And what of Jonas? He had gone down into the ship's hold, and fallen fast asleep. But that would not serve; up came the captain and asked what he meant, to be there sleeping? Up, said he, and cry out upon thy God! Why knowest thou God will take pity on us, and grant us our lives yet?

By this, the ship's company were of another counsel; Nay, said one to another, cast us the lot, and so find out how it is that such peril has befallen us! And cast lots they did, and Jonas was singled out. Tell us, they cried, the whose sake is it that we are come into such peril? Tell us what thy errand is, whence thou art journeying and whither, what nation it was gave thee birth. I am a Hebrew, he told them, and worship the Lord, the God of heaven, that made the sea and the dry land both. And when they heard (for he told them all) that this was a man who would escape from the Lord's sight, they were in a great taking of fear. What shall we do? they asked. And how great was their fear, if we would have yonder man calmed for us? (Even as they spoke, the waves grew more angry yet.)

Why, said he, cast me up and throw me over the ship's side; doubt there is none, I am the cause of all this peril that has befallen you.

What would you? They fell to the work, but could nothing avail; every angrier grew the sea about them. And at last they cried out upon the Lord; Take we this man's life, they said, let it not be to our own undoing! Do not charge us with the death of an innocent man, thou who hast so manifested thy divine will! And with that, they took Jonas up, and threw him over the ship's side. All at once, the raging of the sea was stilled.

<sup>1</sup> For whose sake? that is, probably, "in vengeance for whom," the assumption being that Jonas was a murderer (he, sing.). But this clause is omitted by the best manuscripts of the Septuagint Greek, and it may possibly be a footnote on the similar clause in verse 7, accidentally included in the text.

what fear fell on those mariners! What sacrifices they made, what vows  
they offered to the Lord!

## CHAPTER 2

AND what of Jonas? At the Lord's bidding, a great sea-beast had  
swallowed him up; and there, in the belly of it, three days spent he  
and three nights. This was the prayer which Jonas made to the Lord:  
his God, there in the belly of the sea-beast: Call I on the Lord in my  
peril, unless he grants me<sup>1</sup> from the very womb of the grave call I, then  
art listening to me! Here in the depths of the sea's heart thou wouldst  
cut me away, flood of thine, wave of thine sweeping over me, still it  
seemed as if I were shut out from thy regard; yet life thou grantest me;  
I shall gaze on thy holy temple<sup>2</sup> once again. Around me the deadly waters  
close, the depths engulf me, the waves are wrapped about my head;  
monstrous creatures I must pluck, the very bars of earth my ascending  
prison; and still, O Lord my God, thou wilt raise me, living, from the  
tomb. Banned this hour, yet still of the Lord I would bethink me;  
a prayer of mine should reach him, far away in his holy temple! Let fools  
that count false worship all hope of pardon forge; mine to do sacrifice in  
thy house, vows made and paid to the Lord, my deliverer!

And now, at the Lord's bidding, the sea-beast cast Jonas up again, a  
high and dry on the beach.

## CHAPTER 3

A SECOND time the Lord's voice came to Jonas: Up, and to the  
great city of Nineve make thy way; there preach, what preach I bid  
thee. That voice he obeyed; rose up and took the road for Nineve, a great  
city indeed, three days' journey from end to end. And when he had  
advanced into it as far as one day's journey would carry him, he began  
crying out, In forty days, Nineve will be overthrown. With that, the  
Ninevites shewed faith in God, rich and poor alike, proclaiming a fast  
and putting on sackcloth: nay, the king of Nineve himself, when word of  
it reached him, came down from his throne, put on sackcloth, and sat

<sup>1</sup> Verses 9-10: CE, Ps. 130:1; 137:3; cf. Jn. 3:13; 8:58; 11:47; 11:50; 11:51; 11:52; 11:53; 11:54; 11:55; 11:56; 11:57; 11:58; 11:59; 11:60; 11:61; 11:62; 11:63; 11:64; 11:65; 11:66; 11:67; 11:68; 11:69; 11:70; 11:71; 11:72; 11:73; 11:74; 11:75; 11:76; 11:77; 11:78; 11:79; 11:80; 11:81; 11:82; 11:83; 11:84; 11:85; 11:86; 11:87; 11:88; 11:89; 11:90; 11:91; 11:92; 11:93; 11:94; 11:95; 11:96; 11:97; 11:98; 11:99; 12:1; 12:2; 12:3; 12:4; 12:5; 12:6; 12:7; 12:8; 12:9; 12:10; 12:11; 12:12; 12:13; 12:14; 12:15; 12:16; 12:17; 12:18; 12:19; 12:20; 12:21; 12:22; 12:23; 12:24; 12:25; 12:26; 12:27; 12:28; 12:29; 12:30; 12:31; 12:32; 12:33; 12:34; 12:35; 12:36; 12:37; 12:38; 12:39; 12:40; 12:41; 12:42; 12:43; 12:44; 12:45; 12:46; 12:47; 12:48; 12:49; 12:50; 12:51; 12:52; 12:53; 12:54; 12:55; 12:56; 12:57; 12:58; 12:59; 12:60; 12:61; 12:62; 12:63; 12:64; 12:65; 12:66; 12:67; 12:68; 12:69; 12:70; 12:71; 12:72; 12:73; 12:74; 12:75; 12:76; 12:77; 12:78; 12:79; 12:80; 12:81; 12:82; 12:83; 12:84; 12:85; 12:86; 12:87; 12:88; 12:89; 12:90; 12:91; 12:92; 12:93; 12:94; 12:95; 12:96; 12:97; 12:98; 12:99; 13:1; 13:2; 13:3; 13:4; 13:5; 13:6; 13:7; 13:8; 13:9; 13:10; 13:11; 13:12; 13:13; 13:14; 13:15; 13:16; 13:17; 13:18; 13:19; 13:20; 13:21; 13:22; 13:23; 13:24; 13:25; 13:26; 13:27; 13:28; 13:29; 13:30; 13:31; 13:32; 13:33; 13:34; 13:35; 13:36; 13:37; 13:38; 13:39; 13:40; 13:41; 13:42; 13:43; 13:44; 13:45; 13:46; 13:47; 13:48; 13:49; 13:50; 13:51; 13:52; 13:53; 13:54; 13:55; 13:56; 13:57; 13:58; 13:59; 13:60; 13:61; 13:62; 13:63; 13:64; 13:65; 13:66; 13:67; 13:68; 13:69; 13:70; 13:71; 13:72; 13:73; 13:74; 13:75; 13:76; 13:77; 13:78; 13:79; 13:80; 13:81; 13:82; 13:83; 13:84; 13:85; 13:86; 13:87; 13:88; 13:89; 13:90; 13:91; 13:92; 13:93; 13:94; 13:95; 13:96; 13:97; 13:98; 13:99; 14:1; 14:2; 14:3; 14:4; 14:5; 14:6; 14:7; 14:8; 14:9; 14:10; 14:11; 14:12; 14:13; 14:14; 14:15; 14:16; 14:17; 14:18; 14:19; 14:20; 14:21; 14:22; 14:23; 14:24; 14:25; 14:26; 14:27; 14:28; 14:29; 14:30; 14:31; 14:32; 14:33; 14:34; 14:35; 14:36; 14:37; 14:38; 14:39; 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15:86; 15:87; 15:88; 15:89; 15:90; 15:91; 15:92; 15:93; 15:94; 15:95; 15:96; 15:97; 15:98; 15:99; 16:1; 16:2; 16:3; 16:4; 16:5; 16:6; 16:7; 16:8; 16:9; 16:10; 16:11; 16:12; 16:13; 16:14; 16:15; 16:16; 16:17; 16:18; 16:19; 16:20; 16:21; 16:22; 16:23; 16:24; 16:25; 16:26; 16:27; 16:28; 16:29; 16:30; 16:31; 16:32; 16:33; 16:34; 16:35; 16:36; 16:37; 16:38; 16:39; 16:40; 16:41; 16:42; 16:43; 16:44; 16:45; 16:46; 16:47; 16:48; 16:49; 16:50; 16:51; 16:52; 16:53; 16:54; 16:55; 16:56; 16:57; 16:58; 16:59; 16:60; 16:61; 16:62; 16:63; 16:64; 16:65; 16:66; 16:67; 16:68; 16:69; 16:70; 16:71; 16:72; 16:73; 16:74; 16:75; 16:76; 16:77; 16:78; 16:79; 16:80; 16:81; 16:82; 16:83; 16:84; 16:85; 16:86; 16:87; 16:88; 16:89; 16:90; 16:91; 16:92; 16:93; 16:94; 16:95; 16:96; 16:97; 16:98; 16:99; 17:1; 17:2; 17:3; 17:4; 17:5; 17:6; 17:7; 17:8; 17:9; 17:10; 17:11; 17:12; 17:13; 17:14; 17:15; 17:16; 17:17; 17:18; 17:19; 17:20; 17:21; 17:22; 17:23; 17:24; 17:25; 17:26; 17:27; 17:28; 17:29; 17:30; 17:31; 17:32; 17:33; 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† down humbly in the dust. And a cry was raised in Nineve, at the bidding  
 of the king and his nobles. A fast for man and beast, for herd and flock;  
 † no food is to be eaten, no water drunk; let man and beast go covered  
 with sackcloth; cry out lustily to the Lord, and forsake, each of you, his  
 † sinful life, his wrongful deeds! God may yet relent and pardon, forgo  
 † his raging anger and spare our lives. Thus, when God saw them  
 attending their lives in good earnest, he spared them, in his mercy, their  
 threatened punishment.

## CHAPTER 4

† AS for Jonas, he took it very amiss, and was an angry man that day.  
 † And thus he made his prayer to the Lord: See if this be not the very  
 thought I had, far away in my own country! Good cause had I to seek  
 refuge at Tharbis from such an ordeal as this. I know from the first what  
 manner of God thou art, how kind and merciful, how slow to punish,  
 † how rich in pardon, vengeance ever ready to forgive. A haire of thine, Lord!  
 † Take away this life of mine; I had rather die than live. Why, the Lord  
 said, what anger is this?  
 † Jonas had left the city, and sat now under a little arbor he had made  
 for himself on the east of it, waiting there in the shade to see what doom  
 † would fall on Nineve. And now, at the Lord God's bidding, an ivy-plant  
 grew up over Jonas' head, to give him shade and shelter after his toiling,  
 † and great joy he had of his ivy-plant. But when the morrow dawned,  
 came at God's bidding a worm, that struck at the plant's root and killed  
 † it. Up rose the sun, and at the Lord's bidding the shadow came; here was  
 Jonas with the sun's rays beating on his head, and all of a sweat. Now  
 indeed his heart's prayer was, he might die; better death than life, said he.  
 † Why, said the Lord, what anger is this over an ivy-plant? Dearly angry  
 † am I, Jonas answered, and so marvel within. Great pity thou hast, the  
 Lord said, for yonder ivy-plant, that was not of thy growing, and no toil  
 † cost thee; a plant that springs in a night, and in a night must wither! And  
 what of Nineve? Here is a great city, with a hundred and twenty thousand  
 folk in it, and none of them can tell right from left, all these cattle, too,  
 and may I not spare Nineve?

† The exact face of the Hebrew idiom used here is uncertain. Some think it means, 'Hast thou good reason to be angry?'; others would translate, 'Art thou very angry?'

# THE PROPHECY OF MICHAELAS

## CHAPTER I

THIS message came from the Lord to Michaelas the Mesarithine, during the reigns of Jotham, Achaz and Sennacherib in Judea; this revelation was made to him concerning Samaria and Jerusalem both together.

A word for you, nations far and near; let the whole world give audience, and all the world certainly listen to this indictment the Lord God brings, from his high throne all beholding. See, where the Lord comes out from his dwelling-place; and, as he makes his way down, the recesses peaks of earth for his pathway, melt hills at his touch, melt valleys flat was before the sea, like water over the steep peaks flowing away!

Alas, what heinous is? What has Jacob's going astray, what has guilt of Israel's land? Head and throat of Jacob's sleeping Samaria needs must be, now as Jerusalem is Judea's place of pilgrimage.<sup>1</sup> In ruin Samaria shall lie, a heap of stones in the open countryside, a fortress for vineyards; all down yonder valley I will drag the stones of her, all her very foundations are laid bare. Shattered all these idols must be, burnt to ashes the graven she wears; never an image but shall be left desolate; all shall go the way of a basket's wages, that were a basket's wages from the first.

For this, should I not make the deep alone? Therefore go I and stripped; rejected our earthly cakes eat more lamentably. Hurt is here past all cure, that to Judea itself must spread; Jerusalem itself, most of my own countryside, shall feel the blow. Grief of Gath<sup>2</sup> must never hear the news, hushed is

<sup>1</sup> In the original, the latter part of this verse reads simply, "What is the crime of Israel: is it not Samaria? And what are the hill-cities of Judea, are they not Jerusalem?" The sense of the phrase cannot be determined with certainty.

<sup>2</sup> "The graven she wears" literally, "the wages of a basket," as in the concluding part of the sentence. The prophet seems to regard the idolatrous accessories of Samaria's worship not as a gift from man to God, but as a gift from God to man (possibly in allusion to the idea that false gods were responsible for Israel's prosperity, cf. Ch. x. 1). The end of the verse is perhaps merely a proverb, "lightly come, lightly go," used of wealth won in easy ways.

<sup>3</sup> Such names to have been treated from the Philistines by Coker (II. Isa. 26. 10); Michaelas points out that this and the neighbouring towns will once more be lost to Judea as the result of the Assyrian invasion. He plays upon the names of these towns by a series of rough associations, of which the rendering given above may afford some idea. Unfortunately, the text of verses 20-22 seems to have been much disturbed; the meaning of the phrase is doubtful in several places, and the Latin version, like the Syriac and Greek, yields no satisfactory sense, even where it can be construed as grammar. The Latin version also represents most of the place-names by romanian names. It is, therefore, the sense of the Hebrew text that is given here.

- be the sound of weeping, after as Beth-shean cast the dust on your heads.  
 11 Away with you, Shephai's folk, shrieking and threatened of coming and  
 going in Saisan: signs is none; mourning of Beth-shean . . . has taken the  
 12 ground from under your feet. Mourn, now, are the anxious hopes of  
 March; so rashless the Lord's desire against yonder gates of Jerusalem.  
 13 Fecitiously as Lachis' keepses they stand so changing; Lachis, that first  
 betrayed poor Sion into guilt, that was Israel's misdeeds in wrong-doing!  
 14 Marriages-dower this daughter of thine, Mordecai-gate, shall cast thee  
 15 hence is Achish, too, for the royal policy how ride a sea-bird! Thy  
 marches, Marssa, shall be hidden once again in Odishan . . .  
 16 . . . Israel's glory shall cease.<sup>1</sup> Such pride in the children! Shaveen bare  
 thy brow, valiant itself is not so bald; also, for some of thine called for  
 away!

## CHAPTER 2

- OUT upon you, that lie awake over dreams of mischief, schemes of ill,  
 and are up at dawn of day to execute them, soon at your gardens  
 1 hands find opportunity!—Gates they leave or lands, houses or lands by  
 robbery become thine; ever their appetites come between a man and  
 2 his home, a man and his inheritance. And I, too, the Lord says, am  
 driving mischief, mischief against the whole clan of you; never think to  
 shake it off from your necks and walk proudly as of old: ill days are  
 3 coming. A by-word then they shall make of you, songs and diths make over  
 you most feloniously: Stripped, stripped bare! My country's bounds  
 removed! Come he but once again, that so pacifies our our lands, all is  
 4 lost to me! Trust not, when lands are allotted among the Lord's people,  
 never shall one of yonder clan have rape to throw.<sup>2</sup>

- 5 Prophets, leave your prophesyings: word of prophecy is never for such  
 6 as these, never may shame overtake them.<sup>3</sup> What, cry they of Jacob, is  
 the Lord so easily offended? Are his designs indeed so unfavourable? Nay,

<sup>1</sup> The allusion to Lachis as specially responsible for Judah's misdeeds has not been consistently explained.

<sup>2</sup> It seems impossible to find any meaning in the phrase, 'the glory of Israel shall come to Odishan,' and the text of the verse may well have suffered in transmission.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'these shall not have a man to show a rape.' It is difficult to see what is the singular subject addressed as 'these,' unless it be the clan mentioned in verse 5, though indeed we might have expected a feminine proposition to follow it.

<sup>4</sup> Verses 4-12 are very obscure, and some critics think the text has suffered from considerable faults of copying. Verse 5 begins, in the Hebrew text, 'The son prophesying, they will prophesy, they will not prophesy to these,' and in the Latin version, 'Do not speak speaking, it will not sleep upon these.'

certain it is, if a man will follow the straight path, sword of mine shall  
 prosper him; but what of you? Has not this people of mine hung round  
 you enemies, rising up to smite you? Robbers, that will have cloak and  
 coat both; what marvel if simple folk are up in arms against you? My  
 people! And you would dispossess the women of the houses they loved,  
 take away from its children . . . my glory for ever.<sup>1</sup> Do you, in your turn, as  
 rise up and go your ways, no resting-place shall you have here; corrup-  
 tion most foul the guilt of this land shall breed in it.

Alas, that I should be one betrayed by the spirit, and not rather some-  
 thing of Israel! Woe and woe to inspire him, he might prophesy, and a  
 people such as this take him for an oracle: 'Trust me, Israel, I mean to  
 assemble thee in full strength, nally all that is left of Israel is one piece,  
 thronging like sheep in fold, like herd in byre, horns of wolves echoing all  
 around; where the branch has been made ready for them, break they out  
 and pass on their way, nally forth with a king to lead them, with the Lord  
 in their head!'

## CHAPTER 3

**B**UT no, this is my word to you, children of Jacob's line, rulers of  
 Israel! What should sustain justice, if not you? Alas, that you should  
 be the foes of right, the friends of wrong! Beasts of prey, that will have  
 skin and flesh both, leave nothing save the bare bone. My people! And  
 you will gnaw flesh of them, eat skin of them, break bones of them;  
 eat them to please, meat for your pot, roast for your oven! What marvel,  
 if the Lord will not listen to such cry as yours, turn his back on you in  
 your distress, for your ill deserving?

And this message the Lord has for prophets that guide my people  
 astray, prophets that must have their mouths filled ere they will cry, All's  
 well! say them must give them, else they shall be their record strange.  
 Voices would you see, all shall be right around you, search you the  
 skies, you shall stand in the dark; never a prophet! but his sin is set, his

<sup>1</sup> It seems difficult to believe that this text has not suffered here, either by corruption or by omission.

<sup>2</sup> Verses 11–13 are usually printed as if a fresh paragraph began with verse 11. But verses 12 and 13, in that case, wholly interrupt the run of the passage, and the sense of encouragement is particularly out of place here. The rendering given above assumes that verses 12 and 13 are the utterance of the imaginary false prophet, verse 1 of the next chapter being the message which Micah has, as a true prophet, is forced to deliver. It is doubtful whether there is any reference here to a person from outside; the situation envisaged seems rather to be a nation being a betrayed stronghold (cf. IV Eze. 13.4).

- 7 day turned into twilight! Seen (but see nothing), baffled diviners, acknow-  
 8 ledge them, finger on lip, words from God it none. But here stands one that  
 is full of the Lord's spirit; vigorous it looks (see, and discernment, and  
 holiness, faith of Jacob re-awakened, guilt of Israel to proclaim.
- 4 A word with you, chieftains of Jacob's line, rulers of Israel, that hold  
 5 right abominable, and all justice pervert; that build up strength of Sion,  
 6 fortresses of Jerusalem, with deeds of bloodstained and of wrong! Never a  
 judge but has his price; never a priest tradition teaches, but for hire;  
 never a prophet, but must have his hand filled with silver! And all the  
 while, how lean they on the Lord! Is not he in their midst? How dreadful  
 10 harm befall them? Trust me, for such guilt as yours I will reap re-ward:  
 Sion into plough-lands; standing heaps of stones that were once Jeru-  
 salem, and bushwood of the high forest growing over the Temple hill.

## CHAPTER 4

- THE Temple HILL! One day it shall stand (see, highest of all the moun-  
 1 tain heights, overtopping the peaks of them, and the nations will  
 2 flock there together. A multitude of peoples will make their way to it,  
 crying, Come, let us climb up to the Lord's mountain peak, to the house  
 where the God of Jacob dwells; he shall teach us the right way, we will  
 walk in the paths he has shown. The Lord's command shall go out from  
 3 Sion, his word from Jerusalem, and he will sit in judgment on the  
 nations, giving his sword to peoples far away. Sword they will fashion  
 into ploughshares and spear into pruning-hook; no more there shall be  
 4 for nation to levy war against nation, and train itself in arms. An eye  
 you shall see, each of you with his own vine, his own fig-tree to give him  
 shade, and none to raise the alarm; each blessing the Lord of hosts pro-  
 5 mounced on you. Let other nations go their own way, each with the name  
 of its own god to rally its men to march under the banner of Jeshu, our God  
 for ever and for evermore!
- 4 When that time comes, the Lord says, I will gather them in again and  
 take them to myself, flock of miles that go limping and struggling, over  
 1 since I brought calamity on them; lame shall yet be a flock to breed  
 from, and wayworn shall grow into a sturdy race; here in Sion they shall  
 2 dwell, and the Lord be king over them, for ever henceforward. And then,  
 the watch-tower of this flock, stout-capped fortress where the lady Sion

<sup>1</sup> vs. 1-3. The same words occur at the beginning of Is. 2. Since Micah was Israhel's contemporary, it seems probable that both prophets are quoting from some older fragments of literature.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'All peoples will walk each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of Jeshu our God for ever and for evermore.'



signs, power shall come back to thee as of old, once more Jerusalem shall be a queen.

When that time comes! At this present time, what signifi-  
cations there? Have king and counsellor played their parts, that the pangs  
of travail take hold on thee? Sorrow thou wilt weep, lady of Zion, and  
labour as any woman brought to bed; thy days upon roads leave, and  
lodge in the open countryside, nay, to distant Babylon thou must  
journey! there it is thou wilt find deliverance, there it is the Lord will  
ransom thee from the power of thy enemies. At this present time, how  
many the nations that gather about thee, crying, Death to the adulterous  
Femur we covet on Zion's downfall! Little they know God's thoughts,  
little they guess that he is but storing them up, like wheat in the thresh-  
ing-floor! Up, lady of Zion, and set about the threshing of them! Ham  
of iron, hoof of bronze he will give thee, to grind all that conspiracy of  
nations to dust. Perish to the Land their ill-gotten gains shall be nothing  
of theirs but must be his, who is master of the whole earth.

## CHAPTER 5

AT this present time, what is left thee but to smother thy roaring hatch,  
daughter of an ancient king? Hard slugs presser as now, unknown on  
the cheek, now, is the ruler of Israel.<sup>1</sup>

Bethlehem-Ephraim! Least do they reckon thee among all the clans of  
Judah? Nay, it is from thee I look to find a prince that shall rule over  
Israel. Whence comes he? From the first beginning, from ages uncounted?<sup>2</sup>

Marvel not, then, if the Lord abandons his people<sup>3</sup> for a time, until

<sup>1</sup> The mention of Babylon suggests, to the modern reader, the Captivity, which took place a century later. Michael's own contemporaries will have imagined that they were going to take refuge in Babylon as in a friendly country (IV Kg. vii. 16).

<sup>2</sup> The beginning of this verse reads literally, 'Thou shalt be laid waste, daughter of Judah'; in the Hebrew text, 'Thou shalt be laid waste' is 'Thou shalt dwell lowly' (or possibly 'be dwelt') i.e. in sign of mourning. Thus both the meaning of the verse and its historical background are obscure, but undoubtedly the prophet is preaching gentile wars, and reminding the fellow-countrymen that this war, in such days, king David's experience.

<sup>3</sup> Our present Hebrew text reads, 'Thou hast too small to be among the clans of Judah', but there may have been an alternative reading, 'Thou art not small among the clans of Judah.' This would account for the concluding given in Mt. 2.6, without making it necessary to suppose that the translation of St Matthew's *Armenae* was guilty of an error. 'From ages uncounted' literally, 'From the days of eternity,' but this is a phrase used somewhat loosely by Hebrew authors (cf. Job below), and no certain theological inferences can be based on it.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'he abandons them,' but the sense is presumably that given.

the who is in travail has brought forth her child; others there are, brethren of his,<sup>1</sup> that must be restored to the citizenship of Israel. Barbed by the Lord his God, confidence is that mighty pastureman, stands he, our shepherd, and safely folds his flock; none of him now reaches to the world's end; who else should be its hope of recovery? What though the Assyrian invade our country, trample down our strongholds? Seven leaders of men we shall find to marshal us, and as eighth yet in reserve; avowed in Israel, they shall hard the men of Assyria, mailed steel for the hand of Nemrod! Invade they, trample they as they will, he shall be our deliverance.

1 Poor remnant of Jacob, lost among that multitude of peoples! Yet thine it shall; down now the grass thrive, with dew and shower from the Lord to water it, nor looks for man's treading, subsides to our human toll? Poor remnant of Jacob, among those heathen multitudes lost! Yet lo! now amid the forest herds, lion's whelp amid flock of sheep, thine our ruler pangs, brings not down more inexorably his prey. High triumph thou shalt have over thy enemies, perish all that bear thee ill will!

2 All other help, the Lord says, shall thou be denied thee; gone, home is and charter of thine, the cities lost, ruined the strongholds. Sorely thou shalt have none to trust in, nor divining; gone idol and sacred pillar of thine, nor any of thy own imaginings left that is worthy; uprooted the woods of thy false worship, fallen the cities. Only thou shalt my fierce anger find its scope, only thou fall my vengeance upon the nations that defied me.

## CHAPTER 6

**L**ISTEN to this message I have from the Lord! Up, and to the mountains make thy complaint, let the hill-sides echo with thy wail! Lament they must, ponder surely bastions of earth, while the Lord implores his people; Israel stands upon its trial now. Tell me, my people, what have I done, that thou shouldst be a-wary of me? *Aurur* me. Was it ill done, to rescue thee from Egypt, set thee free from a slave's prison, send Moses and Aaron and Mary to guide thee on thy way? Perchance, then, what designs had Balak, king of Moab, and how Balaam the son of Beor answered him . . . from Seir to Gulgair, and camest thou down, then, the selfishness of the Lord's friendship?<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Apparently the brethren of the Mesopotamian princes; the Septuagint Greek gives "their brethren," but this is probably guesswork.

<sup>2</sup> It seems probable that some words have been lost here, *Seir* and *Gulgair* are not connected in any way with Balaam's people; but now, respectively, the last camping-ground of Israel before, and its first camping-ground after, the passage of Jordan.

How best may I humble myself before the Lord, that is God most high? What offering shall I bring? Calb, think you, of a year old, for my burnt-sacrifice? Full men by the thousand, foremost back-gates by the ten thousand, will the Lord be better pleased? Shall gift of first-born for wrong-doing atone, body's fruit for soul's wrongdoing? Nay, son of Belshazzar, what need is add? Best of all it is, and this above all the Lord demands of thee, right thou shouldst do, and seek love, and carry thyself humbly in the presence of thy God.

So comes the divine voice to ponder thy; but he shall thrive, that stands in awe? Listen, fellow tributaries, to that voice which of you dares contain it? What of hooves upturned, that hide yet the El-gornas gain,<sup>1</sup> is the false measure that calls down my vengeance? Here the sacred scales, is there the bag of stolen weights, and shall I hold you acquitted? City is where the rich are ever busy with oppression, where all is treachery, and a man has a tongue in his mouth only to deceive! Thy turn, now, to feel my love, thy guilt is thy undoing. Thine to eat, and eating, never have thy fill; for all alike, now, the same affliction.<sup>2</sup> Thine to endure, but thy slaves never to keep; those thou hast, I mean to make over to the sword. Now shalt thou, and never reap, press olive, and never make wine, tread in grapes, and no wine drink. Commands of Amri thou wouldst obey, not mine, Abab's purposes, not mine, fulfill; their bidding if thou wouldst follow, what marvel that I should mark thee down for ruin, provision for the kiss of scorn? Shame of its own weight the people that it makes must lose.<sup>3</sup>

## CHAPTER 7

**Y**OUR turn for God! Not more girlish work is glancing when the vintage is done; never a cluster to eat; for the ripe figs belly craves

<sup>1</sup> "What need is add", literally, "I will add them," but in the Hebrew text "he has add thee" (or possibly, "it has been add thee").

<sup>2</sup> "Guilt is awe"; literally, "awe is awe of thy name." This verse is very obscure in the Hebrew text, and its interpretation remains uncertain.

<sup>3</sup> "The El-gornas gain", literally, "the richest of El-gornas gain," but it would appear that the Latin version and the Septuagint Greek have here misinterpreted a word in the original.

<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew word here rendered "affliction" denotes sorrows etc., and the rendering given to the Latin is perhaps only a conjecture. In the second part of the verse, the Hebrew text is generally understood as referring, not to misfortune, but to the removal of wives, children, etc., from a place of safety.

<sup>5</sup> The concluding words of the chapter read literally, "You shall hear the reproach of my people." Some think this means, "You (the city) shall hear the reproach of my people in general"; others suppose that there is a slight error in the manuscripts, and that we should read, "You shall hear the reproach of the (Jewish) nation."

- 1 in vain. Fled is glory, vanished beauty, from human kind; wretchedness  
 plots afoot; the heart is up everywhere, man spreading his net for man.  
 2 Even the wrong done, and fair names devised for it; ruler must have his  
 benevolence, and judge his gravity, and tyrant critics know what is his  
 earnest work; they know well how to wrap it up.<sup>1</sup> Count as doones they  
 be, that are kindest of them, close as thorn-bodge, that are honest above  
 the rest. Surely this is the day thy watchmen flouted, surely thou wilt  
 call them to account; not long delayed their last currency!  
 3 Trust no man, give thy heart to no man, though he be friend and  
 companion of thine; against the wile that lies on thy bosom, guard the  
 enemy of thy life! Here, where son feels father, and daughter her mother,  
 and son's wife her mother-in-law, where a man's own household are his  
 enemies! On the Lord my eyes are set; it is to God I look for my protec-  
 tion; my own God, and will he deny me violence?  
 4 Cry that Zion hairet, never triumph over her fall; did I, it is but to  
 rise again, if I in darkness, the Lord will be my light. The Lord's dis-  
 pleasure I must bear, I that have sinned against him, will at last be wakened  
 my plea, and grant redress. One time the light he will bring me, to find  
 5 him faithful still. Scorn shocked that enemy of mine shall behold in only  
 yesterday she was crying, 'What is become of thy God now? Welcome the  
 sight, when she is trampled down like mire in the streets!'  
 6 Day of pell-mell disorder it shall be, the day of the walls' rebuilding;  
 7 a day when folk shall resort to thee from all the lands that lie between  
 Assyria and the towers of Egypt, between Egypt and . . . Bosphorus,  
 8 between sea and sea, mountain-range and mountain-range.<sup>2</sup> By then,  
 the whole countryside will be lying desolate, each toward the inhospitable  
 9 of it have earned by their ill-doing. With that staff of thine gather thy  
 people in, the flock that is thy very own, scattered now in the flocks

<sup>1</sup> The interpretation of this verse is difficult; the meaning given above seems to be the Latin text.

<sup>2</sup> We have no means of determining whether the last thirteen words are part of what the civil city used to say about Zion, or part of what Zion will say about the civil city.

<sup>3</sup> The passage is obscure, and there is some reason to doubt whether the text has been preserved accurately. It may literally, 'Day for the building of thy walls, that on so day the limb is removed far off; that that day and be for, people) shall come all the way to thee, all the way from Assur and the cities of Babel, all the way from Masee and to the River, and the sea from the sea and the mountains the mountains.' 'Limb' on hardy means 'limb', a notion which is always governed elsewhere by a different word (over one hundred times in the Old Testament). The phrase 'limb is removed' is a figure of speech, probably meant to suggest mutilation, like our 'litterly-pitterly'. Masee is translated in a proper noun, 'Yonover' is the Latin version. It is hard to see why the space between Assur and Egypt should be regarded as different from the space between Egypt and the Bosphorus; possibly something has dropped out.

glades, with rich plenty all around them; Brass and Obed for their pasture-grounds, as in the days of old. Now for such wonderful evidences as of power as manifested thy rescuing of them from Egypt! Here is a sight to make the Gentiles hold their valour cheap, stand there dumb; ay, and why not deaf too? Let them lick the dust, serpent-fashion, crawl out from their houses, the scared reptiles, in terror of the Lord our God; much more they shall have to fear him.

Was there ever such a God, so ready to forgive sin, to overlook iniquity, as among the scattered remnant of his chosen race? He will exact vengeance no more; he loves to pardon. He will relent, and have mercy on us, as quenching our guilt, burying our sin away sea-deep. Thus with keep thy promise to Jacob, show mercy to Abraham, thy promised mercies of long ago.

## THE PROPHECY OF NAHUM

### CHAPTER I

- W**HAT burden for Nineveh? Here is master revealed to Nahum the Elkesite. A jealous lover the Lord is, and takes full vengeance; full vengeance the Lord takes, no stranger, he, to indignation; nor spares rebel, nor spares the wrong. Kide his time he may, but power lacks not; guilty is guilty still. Storm and whirlwind are the path he reads, cloud-break the dust he spurns; the sea at his rebuke dries up, streams turn into a desert, flames withers away, and Carmel, all the leaf of Lebanon withers. Shaluk and shalvel they, mountain-top and hill-side, before him quakes earth at his coming, and all the world of men with it. Alas, whom the blow of his retribuent falls, who may comfort that fierce anger un-moved? Here is vengeance poured out like fire, no man the hand could.
- None so gracious as the Lord, no strength like his in the hour of distress, do but trust him, and he will keep thee in his care . . .
- . . . Flood-side shall overwhelm the size of it; over his enemies land distances at their heels. Think not, by shifts of years, to thwart the Lord's will; believe not, he will take full tale, there shall be no second visitation.
- Close be it as thick as thorns, ponder conspiracy over the cups, all at once, like smothered rubble, they shall be consumed.<sup>1</sup>
- Here is one of thy number deriving rebellion against the Lord, Sully's reconciler. But thus the Lord says: Be they in full measure? At least there are over many of them they must be shown of their strength. It will pass; more chastened is chastened enough,<sup>2</sup> and now I mean no chasten that joke of his that lies on thy back, nor thy chains surrender . . .
- For thee, this doom the Lord has; none shall ever spring from thee to bear thy name, nor in the temple of thy god any images be left, and so

<sup>1</sup> Since there is no noun in verse 7 in which the words 'of it' can conceivably refer, the suggestion naturally arises that there may have been an accidental omission in the text.

<sup>2</sup> Some modern scholars, by means of shuffling and transposing the text, make verses 1-10 a new part of an abecedarian poem; i.e., one in which the first verse in the Hebrew begins with Aleph, the second with Beth, and so on (cf. e.g., Ps. 111). There is some reason to think that Ps. 9 was originally abecedarian, and the verse of it was confused by subsequent editing (as happened with the *Hymn of Praise* of Lucretius). But a careful examination of the present chapter suggests that the apparent traces of anagrammatism may be due to mere coincidence.

<sup>3</sup> The meaning of the Hebrew text here is uncertain, and many scholars think it corrupt. It runs, literally, "Thus the Lord says: Are they complete? No, if they are complete even so they are many, and even so they will be shamed. And it (or, he) will pass, and I have suffered thee but I will not suffer thee any more."

nerve; and I will write it on thy tomb-stone, thou wast seeking wealth.<sup>1</sup>

For where they bring good news on the mountains heights, proclaiming: 15  
that all is well! Now, Jude, keep holiday; paid be thy sown; mocking  
enemy shall pass through thee no more; never a one left.<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER 2

HERE is an enemy at thy gates that scares all before him; here is  
close siege, no entry but must be guarded; gird thee well, summon 1  
up all thy strength! Haster of Jude the Lord returns now, and haster 2  
of Israel both, that have seen the spoiler smother them, strip vineyard  
bare.<sup>3</sup> Bright flash that enemy's shields, warriors of his go clad in warlike; 3  
dart like flame his chariots as he goes to the attack, darts every char-  
acter. Now look they in the streets, those chariots, hurry they in the 4  
open market-places, clank they like flame of torches, like the lightning  
that comes and goes!

Alas, for the summer-sun of the king's palace,<sup>4</sup> fallen as they were about 5  
their wall! Swiftly they crossed the walls, but the engines were in place  
already. Open, now, stands the water-gate, crumbles ponder temple into 6  
dust. Alas, for warriors of Ninive gone into exile, for walls of burn led  
away,<sup>5</sup> that sigh and ween like ring-doves in the hircornes of their heart! 7  
Ninive, welcome sight as pools of water to the fugitive,<sup>6</sup> stay! But  
never a one looks back. Out with silver, out with gold of hoard; waste la- 8  
bours of ready stuff beyond price on reckoning! Roof on collar riled and 10

<sup>1</sup> This verse is evidently addressed not to Jude but to Assyria, and must think it has been accidentally misplaced.

<sup>2</sup> Verses 11-15. Some part, or all, of verses 11-15 may refer to the invasion of Sennacherib (II<sup>d</sup> Kg. 18 seq.).

<sup>3</sup> Mowing and burning of this verse are obscure; it tells us that the Lord will smite, or perhaps smite, or perhaps smite, the Assyrians, or perhaps the walls, of Jude, and also that of Israel. 'Jude' is a better equivalent of 'Israel' as a rule here, if the text is sound, it can only be conjectured that Jude stands for Jude, and Israel for the Assyrians. Some think the whole verse has been accidentally misplaced.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'he will remember his palace watches his palace.' There is no evidence that the verb can mean 'to remember,' and the phrase is so awkward that we may be tempted to suggest the people's words something else, e.g., 'his dwelling, his palace.'

<sup>5</sup> The word rendered 'warrior' in the Latin text probably refers, perhaps by a proper name, to some queen or goddess; the word used for 'warrior' here, everywhere else, the name of Israel's goddess.

<sup>6</sup> 'Ninive, welcome sight as pools of water to the fugitive,' the Hebrew text here differs from that of the Septuagint Greek, and of the Latin, but the literal sense is probably, 'Ninive is a pool of water; water is life, and they fugitives.' The meaning of the verse can only be conjectured.

menaced! Here horns are here, and knees that knock together, loins that  
 go laboring, and pain chokes.<sup>1</sup> Lute of lies, and memory of his whelps,  
 what race is left of thee, once so secure a nation, his breast and throat?  
 O! not lions should wait, to preyed he, so mangled he, so filled with  
 plunder of his things the den where he lay. Here at throat rags the Land  
 of horns; ponder chariots shall be burnt to ashes; whelps of thine shall die  
 at the sword's point, plunder of thine be swept off the face of earth; and  
 for thy heralds, their voices shall be heard no more.

## CHAPTER 3

OUT upon thee, city of blood, full fed with meane and rapine, yet  
 still art prey! What sounds are these? Crack of whip, whirling of  
 wheels, heat of horse-head, rattle of chariot. Moans horrendous, flesh like  
 lightning sword and spear; what outrage! How cumbered the earth with  
 dead dead bodies past crowding the living trample over the dead. Har-  
 bar; so swarmed in thy father's days, so fair, so full of victory, too long  
 has thou betrayed a nation here, a tribe there, with ancestry of thine,  
 heredity of thine; and now I will be cruel with thee, says the Lord God  
 of hosts. I mean to set thy skirts flying about thy ears, and lay bare the  
 naked shame of thee, for all the kingdoms of the world to see; perchance  
 shalt be with things abominable, and foully besmeared; such a public  
 shame I will make of thee, passer-by will be fain to slout thee; Nations  
 fallen, says he, and never a man! Search where I will, never a friend to  
 comfort thee? Here was another city, Mo-Ammon,<sup>2</sup> fair as thyself; she  
 too was built on the river-side, water all about her; the sea her mare, the  
 sea her defence. Here the Ebbing land, here was Egypt; westerd thou  
 strength yet, Africa and Libya were at her side; yet thy fate was here,  
 exile, and captivity, and children at every street's turning dashed to  
 death; honour and rank condemned to the left's sway, and the chain's grip.  
 Bereaved and helpless with fear, looking about for succour against the  
 invader, so she was, so thou shalt be. At a touch thy bastions shall fall,  
 like ripe figs that drop into the eater's mouth, soon as tree is shaken;

<sup>1</sup> 'Pain chokes', literally, 'horns like the bladders of a pot.' We may compare Job 24, where the Latin renders the same phrase, 'all horns shall be ranked like a pot.' The literal meaning of the Hebrew text is that they will gather some kind of completion perhaps here described as 'bladders'; the noun does not occur anywhere else.

<sup>2</sup> It is not clear where the remnants of the supposed passer-by come to an end.

<sup>3</sup> Mo or Mo-Ammon is commonly identified with (Egyptian) Thebes, the 'sea' being understood as referring to the Nile. The Latin version gives 'Alexandria', which involves a manifest anachronism.



man-of-war the defenders, the gate wide open to the enemy's on-rush, weakened the bars of doom. 'Water, there, water for a siege! Raise to the battlements higher yod! Down to the clay-pit with thee, tread the mortar, put thy hand to the brick-mould! Fire shall consume thee once in the loss, the sword cut thee off, hungry as locust is devourer.

Thrive thou as locust driven or grasshopper, ay, let thy swarms<sup>1</sup> outnumber the stars in heaven, what avails it? Early hatches locust, early flies away. Feignest, the high look, feignest, the princelings,<sup>2</sup> as they had been locusts, and food of locusts, that cling to powder hedge-row in the chill of morning, and are gone, once the sun is up, who knows whither? Gone to their own thy merchants, king of Assyria thy steeds for a silent in the dust, out on the hills the common folk take refuge, with none to murder them. Wound of thine there is no killing, hurt of thine is a grievous; not any shall hear the tidings of it but shall dry their hands over thee, so long thy tyrannous yoke has rested on so many.

<sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew text, 'thy swarms.' A change of one letter would give 'the foot-soldiers.'

<sup>2</sup> The words rendered 'high look' and 'princelings' are also words of uncertain significance. The Latin has 'grandees' and 'little ones,' but it seems likely that some officials of some kind are meant.

## THE PROPHECY OF HABACUC

### CHAPTER I

**T**HIS burden following was revealed to the prophet Habacuc:

- 1 Lord, must I ever cry out to thee, and pain bearing never? Flood  
2 against tyranny, and no deliverance be granted me? Must I nothing see  
but wrong and suffering; tears where I will, nothing but robbery and  
oppression; quarrels everywhere, everywhere contention raising its head?  
3 When marvel if the old teachings are torn up,<sup>1</sup> and reform is never to be  
found? Injustice by heinous circumvented will, and false sword given!  
4 Have you no eyes for the world about you? Look upon it with wonder  
and awe; in your own days have its strange deeds a-dying, so strange, so  
5 many would scarce credit them if they were told in story.<sup>2</sup> What a position  
is this I am spurring on to battle, the Chaldeans folk, so implacable, so  
swift! Ready to march the wide world over, to there be lands, not theirs,  
6 to conquer! A grim nation and a terrible, whose of right and claim is none  
7 but they. Not heaped to like at home of theirs, nor well at evening to  
burn, wide the sweep of their horrenness, that close in, close in from afar,  
8 dying like vultures hungry for their prey. Ponderous all eager as the  
9 steers their course, whirling away, like sandstorms, their captives!<sup>3</sup> Have  
the men that hold kings in contempt, make princes their sport, no fortress  
but is a child's game to such as these; heap they up the dead, it is theirs.  
10 Vain wind, and he is gone; see him fall down and ascribe the victory to  
his god!<sup>4</sup>  
11 But thou, Lord, my God and all my worship, thou art from eternity!  
And wilt thou see us perished? Warrant of thine they hold, take their  
strength from thee, only to make known thy justice, thy charming  
12 power!<sup>5</sup> So pass those eyes, shall they find no wrong-doing? With thee

<sup>1</sup> 'Are men up'; according to the Hebrew text, 'have lost their vigour.' The reference to warring rises in of the Law) shows they then were told to change among God's own people. But the prophet only sees them as an instance of man's inhumanity to man is proved.

<sup>2</sup> These verses, 1-11, are like the words of Almighty God, as a position to Habacuc's own position against the tyranny of the Chaldeans. Probably, although they are cast into the prophetic form, they represent those which had already taken place at the time when this prophecy was made. Habacuc seems to have lived under the captivity (Dan. 14-34).

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew text here is obscure; some think it means the Chaldeans had their faces set towards the sun, or perhaps simply 'forward.'

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'Thou a wind (or spirit) wilt be changed, and he (or it) will pass by, and he will fall down; this is the strength of his god.' The Hebrew text, which is slightly different, gives a doubtful sense and is perhaps corrupt.

<sup>5</sup> It is not clear whether this means God has raised up the Chaldeans in order

break the sight of appetite, look on while treason is done? Innocence the prey of malice, and go weel from thee? As well had men been taken as in the sea, or crawling things, that eider have none! And indeed is nothing as spare, both of yonder Chaldean; wine and drag he spreads for all, and greed by his he of his sport. Nay, wine must have its victims, because he is allowed to drag where else thanks be for the rich fare on his plate, stands next delay? Trust me, wiser still, yonder net shall be flung, stood of his as will never have done with measure.

## CHAPTER 2

**W**HAT message, then, is sent out to me? What answer shall I make when I am called to account? Here on the watch-tower my post shall be, stand I on the battlements, and wait his signal.

Write down thy vision, the Lord said, on a tablet, so plain that it may be read with a glance; a vision of things far distant, yet one day fulfill they must, no room for doubting it. Wait thou long, yet wait patiently; what must be must, and at the time appointed for it. Find us the doubter's breathes; by his faith he lives, who lives right.

Tyrant, like standard, is marked by false dreams of glory.<sup>1</sup> See him when his appetite, not death itself nor the grave more terrible, gather up a tribe here, a nation there, heap his place with them! One day, what a backward they will make of him! What ridiculing taunts shall be heaped on him! As here follows:

So thou wouldst heap up the possessions that are none of thine, laid thyself with base dream,<sup>2</sup> and it should go on for ever? All answers the for shall spring, worry thee, hurry thee, make a helpless prey of thee. So many heads thou hast plundered, plundered thyself shalt be; enough nations are left for thee; the queen's blood shed, and the fields ravaged, plundered the city shall be, and all that dwell there.<sup>3</sup>

to punish the Jews, or in order to exhibit his justice by punishing, here, the Chaldeans themselves.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'Behold, the watch for life of him who is inordinance will not be straight while live, but the just man will have life in his back. And as wine deceives the desires, so shall a proud man be, and he will not be altered.' The Latin text is evidently trying to render sense to a passage unintelligible in the Hebrew text. The word 'false' in the Old Testament usually means falsification (so our's words here the context suggests that it means confidence).

<sup>2</sup> 'Base dream'; literally, 'thick mist,' a mistaken attempt to identify a Hebrew word which means 'borrower' plagues.' In the next verse, the verb 'worry' or 'hurry' is, in Hebrew, closely allied to a word meaning 'worry.'

<sup>3</sup> Here and in verse 17 before the Latin version has probably misinterpreted the Hebrew construction, referring 'the city and all that dwell there' not to Babylon but to her kings.

- 9 If-gotten gaine thou wouldest assee to deek that house of thine make  
 10 as it an eyrie, too high for evens hands to reach? Nay, with this undoing  
 of many peoples thou hast done thy own house despoile, thy own life is  
 11 sufficte; none from rained wall crieth out against thee, and none from  
 gaping roof schowes the cry.
- 12 City thou wouldest flourish, city's walls build up, with deeds of blood-  
 13 shed and of wrong? What, has not the Lord of hosts entered his door,  
 14 yea, of nations shall feed the fire, and all their labour be spent for nothing?  
 15 It is the Lord's glory none must leave to know, that shall cover the earth,  
 flooding over it like the waters of the sea.<sup>1</sup>
- 16 Thou wouldest pearce out a draught for thy neighbour, a draught thy own  
 hand has poisoned; hasten him as with wine, so leave him stripped and  
 17 bare? This wee to cover thyself with shame, not with glory; drink thou  
 in thy turn, and grow sick? A round for thee, now, from yonder cup the  
 Lord holds in his hand; how shamefully is that glory of thine begreaved  
 18 Wrong done to Labanah, scathe of the rearing heaves, shall recoil on  
 thee; that shall overtake them,<sup>2</sup> city of thine and all that dwell there, for  
 men's blood shed, and for fields reaped.
- 19 What walls image, that carver should be at pains to carve? In metal  
 his own hands have melted shall a man put his trust? Chewing licentious,  
 20 dumb idols all. And thy paper was, stick and stone should wake up and  
 come to thy aid, senseless things that cannot signify their will;<sup>3</sup> nay,  
 breath in their bodies have none, for all they are cricked out with gold and  
 silver.
- 21 And all the while, the Lord is in his holy temple. Keep silence, earth,  
 before him.

## CHAPTER 3

- 1 **A** PRAYER of the prophet Habacuc for Shiglonah.<sup>4</sup>  
 I have heard, Lord, the tale of thy renown, and marvelled at the divine  
 power thou hast. Reveal that power in these latter days, in these latter  
 days make it known once more. And though we have earned thy anger,

<sup>1</sup> Verses 11-14 seem to be a series of questions of. *ibid.* p. 115, *loc. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'it shall frighten thee'; the last word is masculine in the Latin, feminine in the Hebrew. The Hebrew text of this verse is very obscure, and may well be corrupt.

<sup>3</sup> 'Signify their own will'; literally 'speak.' If the text is sound, the contrast must be with the true God as Language.

<sup>4</sup> The Shiglonah? appears to be a personal direction, of uncertain meaning. The Vulgate Latin renders 'for faints of inebriation.'

behind thee of mercy still. God coming near from Thamos, the holy  
One from yonder hills of Phantas! See how his glory encompasses heaven,  
his fame echoes through the earth: the brightness that is his, like light  
itself, he rays that stream from his hand, making its strongly, position  
his wisdom, the warring sickness<sup>1</sup> in his train! There stood he, and  
unmanned the earth; at his look, the nations were adread; melted were the  
overhanging mountains, bowed were the ancient hills, his own immortal  
pathway, as he journeyed. I saw the Ethiop quell in his train,<sup>2</sup> the dwell-  
ings of Madian stir with terror.

Is it the rivers, Lord, that have vexed thy anger, should it be the  
rivers? Or has the sea named thy vengeance, that thou comest thou  
raged on the waves, on the victorious chariot, that how of thine  
brought into full play, which grants to limit the measure of thy suc-  
cess?<sup>3</sup> Earth is now into ravines; the mountains terrible in the sight;  
Fierce falls the rain-storm, the depths beneath as now stand, the heights  
backen from above; sun and moon linger in their dwelling-place;<sup>4</sup> so  
bright the arrows volley, with such sheen of lightning gleams thy spear.

Nay, if thou ride through the world so angrily, with thy diadems as king  
so the nations dumb, it is to smite thy own people, rescue thy own scattered  
remnant, that thou goest out to battle. Down fall the towers in yonder  
castle of galleons, down sink the foundations to their very base; light  
thy bat on its pillars, on the heads of its warriors, eager now to over-  
throw me, confident now as some petty tyrant who oppresses the poor in  
secret. Over the sea, over the ocean beneath its waves, thou hast made a  
path for thy horses to tread.

Such was the tale that set my whole frame trembling at the nostrils of  
in my lips quivered with fear; there was a faintness overcame my whole  
being, my steps faltered as I went. Now with tranquil heart let me watch  
this day of doom, upon the enemies of our people it is destined to fall.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'The warring sickness'; this is the rendering of the new Latin Psalter, the  
Vulgate Latin contains, 'the devil.'

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'the crew of Ethiopia under affliction.' The Vulgate gives a less  
poetical rendering, 'the crew of Ethiopia (captured) for their guilt.'

<sup>3</sup> 'Which grants to limit the measure of thy success'; literally, 'the position  
which they have made to the waters,' see line. 29. 24. The new Latin Psalter has  
'the quiver is full of arrows,' a reading based on certain manuscripts of the  
Septuagint Greek.

<sup>4</sup> 'The heights backen from above; sun and moon linger in their dwelling-  
place'; the new Latin Psalter reads (with certain manuscripts of the Septuagint  
Greek) 'the sun lingers in down to splendour, the moon lingers in her bowers.'

<sup>5</sup> This is the rendering given by the new Latin Psalter, no satisfactory sense is  
offered by the Vulgate here: 'Let vengeance stir into my bow, and draw be-  
neath me, that I may have war in the day of affliction, that I may go up to this  
people of mine which is girded for battle.'

- 17 What though the fig-tree never bud,  
the vine yield no fruit,<sup>1</sup> the olive fail,  
the fields bear no harvest; what though our folds stand empty of sheep,  
18 our towers of cattle? Still will I make my heart in the Lord, triumph in  
19 the deliverance God sends me. The Lord, the ruler of all, is my strong-  
hold, he will bring me safely on my way, safe as the hind whose feet are  
already on the hills.

(For the chief singer, to the harp's music).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The musical direction here printed in brackets is omitted in the new Latin Vulgate the Vulgate has confused it with the start of the canticle.

## THE PROPHECY OF SOPHONIAS

### CHAPTER I

**T**O Sophonias, that was descended from Ezechias through Amaria, Gedalias and Chaias, this message came from the Lord, at the time when Josias son of Amos reigned in Juda.

Fall to I meet, and wood yonder plot of ground, the Lord says; mid it, says he, of man and beast, of bird in air and fish under water, and down shall the goddess come too, never a man left alive upon it. All Juda, all the citizens of Jerusalem, shall feel the stroke. Not a trace shall they leave behind, yonder gods of the countryside, anathema and patent of their own memory; forgotten, all that worship the host of heaven from the roof-tops, all that worship . . . / mid they their paths to the Lord, or circumfary by Mithchem; forgotten, all that turn their backs on the Lord, and will neither seek nor watch for him.

Since, then, to greet the Lord! Here is day of his appointing, here is great sorrow of his preparing, all his guests hidden, all their dressing done. The Lord's sacrifice! A day of reckoning it shall be, king and a prince I will call to account, all that go clad in foreign bravery, all that upon yonder threshold,<sup>1</sup> and fill the house of the Lord their God with drabs of treasury and wrong. What an outcry that day, the Lord says, as from the Fikarogers' Gate, when hurrying from the New Tower! How the hill-sides will echo to the noise of your ruin! Ah, lament indeed, you that dwell in Mithem Valley; of the merchant folk no more is heard; here is an end of all that trafficked in silver.

Time, then, is call for leaps, and watch Jerusalem through! Trust me, I will find them out, spoiled nations, like wine that has rotted on its lees, the men who think to themselves, From the Lord nothing is to hope, nothing to fear. Remanded their wealth shall be, and their houses ruined; houses they build they shall never dwell in, vineyards they plant they shall drink of never. None, none comes the great day of the Lord's reckoning, ay, and now; bitter the fruit of its sowings here is peril to sow the harvest here. Day of vengeance, day of stroke and stress, day of rain and rising; dim and dark, overcast with cloud and storm! City is made as so well fertilised, pinnacle is sent so high in air, but shall hear haying of scythes and the battle-cry. Guilty workers, they shall grope in the dark, flesh and blood of them cheap as dust and dung; silver and gold of it

<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to explain the use of this word except on the supposition that a word has been lost: e.g., 'on the hill-tops,' or 'at the forest shrine.'

<sup>2</sup> It is uncertain what is meant by 'haying over the threshold'; probably it was some superstitious practice: cf. 2 Kg. 3.3.

then powerless to buy off the Lord's present vengeance. Burns through the hand the fire of his slighted love; takes full toll, and speedily, of all that dwelt there.

## Discussion

**B**AND together, men of a nation so little loved, bind yourselves in oaths  
 1 you resolve can bear fruit, like dying shafts pierce the day.<sup>2</sup> Before the  
 divine vengeance falls on you, before the day of atonement comes,  
 2 to the Lord betide ye! To hours doing and pains suffering testify  
 you, men of impious heart whosoever you be, men clinging to his will;  
 it may be, when the hour of the Lord's vengeance comes, you shall find  
 refuge.

4 "Gaps and Aradon to rock and run left, Aradon stormed out the day is  
a son, root and branch destroyed in Aradon! Our upon the broken and  
the holds powder city of our-land, the Lord's doom is on it, the little  
Chains of the Philistines; raised it shall be, and never a man to dwell  
in it. There on the west-land shepherds shall lie at noon, there shall be  
fields for flocks; and who shall dwell there? The remnant that is left of  
Judah's race, there they shall find pasture, when the Lord their God  
before them walk, restore their former lands.

And what of Moab, when of Ammon? Doubt not: I have hated the blasphemy: against them they uttered against my own people, as they encroached upon its borders. As I am a living God, says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, no better shall Moab and Ammon be than Sodom and Gomorrah, all waste and husbandry and sowing, for ever desolate; of my own people enough remnant shall be left, a nation still, to plow and to reap them. Fools that would mock and overreach his own people be, the Lord of hosts, know how to perish: see what terror he will send down! Fools and pious they, gods of the other nations, that they from their places, can be one, to abuse him, ill-used dwellers of the world.

1. You can, even at 160, still find your reward.

93 Then hand shall stretch out northward, and make an end of Assyria;  
94 Nineveh shall be left desolate, a trackless desert. Flocks shall lie down  
there . . . all the wild things of earth: lions and bedouins make their

<sup>10</sup> This passage appears to be addressed to the Jewish people scattered about the world. There is considerable obscurity about the sense, perhaps due to corruption of the text. The reader can hear from, the flying shall pass the day; the Latin version has, 'Before the consumed things forth, the passing they like shall,' which yields no appropriate sense. For 'receive' cf. *ib.* 10, 10; the phrase is no doubt a technical one.

“By the Museum were the *Constituent* men.”

<sup>2</sup> It looks as if there was some slight confusion here; the word for 'check' in the Hebrew is only used of commercial accounts.



dwelling in its doorways, bird-song shall be in the windows, and  
men perched on high to rob the strength of it. And this was the proud  
city that dwelt so free from storms, thinking to herself, Since I stand,  
with no rival; a desert town, like of the wild beasts! Hovers the passer-by in  
mockery, and shakes his fist.

# CHAPTER 3

**O**UT on the rebellious city, the defiled city, so full of wrong!<sup>1</sup> Never  
the tall tower, the waving wooded, trust in the Lord is none; nay,  
they would keep God at a distance. Have he rulers no better than covering  
them, judges like wolf that preys at night, and nor a lion left on the  
morrow; prophets that are headless men and senseless, priests that  
profane the sanctuary and do violence to the law. And all the while the  
Lord is there in the midst of it. Not his the blame; never morning prove  
but he makes known his aimed for their enlightening. Without fail, and  
still injustice goes on unshamed! Short work I have made of other  
nations; crumbling battlements, unsequenced streets, their cities lie  
ruined and fallen, with none to dwell in them. Ah, thought I, now at  
least thou wilt learn to fear me, wilt profit by the warning! Here at least  
is a city that may be left habitable, and thou what plagues I say! But no,  
early and late they would be at their perverse doings still!

Hope, then, is none,<sup>2</sup> till the day, long hence, when I will stand re-  
vealed<sup>3</sup> what gathering, then, of the nations, all kingdoms joined in one!  
And upon them, my doom is, vengeance shall fall, fierce anger of mine  
shall fall; the whole earth shall be consumed with the fire of my slighted  
love. And after that, all the peoples of the world shall have pure lips,<sup>4</sup>  
invoking one and all the Lord's name, straining at a single yoke in the  
Lord's service. From the east, beyond Euphrates rivers, my supplicants  
shall come to me, near<sup>5</sup> of my called people the bloodless offering shall  
bring. No need, then, to blush for wayward thoughts that defiled me;<sup>6</sup>  
gone from thy midst the high-sounding bow, no more, in that mountain  
sanctuary of mine, for pride henceforward; a poor folk and a friendless

<sup>1</sup> The Latin version gives 'the rebelious city, the dove,' but this seems due to a  
false understanding of the Hebrew text, *CE* for *agil*.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, "Therefore thou shalt wait for me," but the text commonly expresses  
an attitude of pious longing, and it looks as if the finished remnant, not the  
assembly of the Jewish people, were being addressed.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'the day when I will rise up henceforward'; the Hebrew text has  
'the day when I will rise up and catch my prey,' the Septuagint Greek, 'the day  
when I will rise up to hear witness.'

<sup>4</sup> As the Hebrew says, 'tongues'; there is some ground for suspecting a faulty  
reading in the manuscripts.

I will leave in thy custody, but one that puts its trust in the Lord's name.

- 10 The remnant of Israel, strangers now to mockery and wrong, the true  
word ever on their lips! Yonder flock may graze and lie down in rest, none  
11 to disturb it. Break into song, O ye Sion, all Israel cry aloud; here is com-  
as first, Jerusalem, for thy royal heart. Thy doom the Lord has revoked, thy  
sorrow requited; the Lord, there is the midst of thee, Israel's king! Peril  
12 for thee henceforth is none. Such is the message yonder day shall bring  
13 to Jerusalem: Courage, Sion! What matter is, the unrevoked hand? Then  
hast one in the midst of thee, the Lord thy God, whose strength shall  
deliver thee. Joy and pride of his thou shalt be henceforward; all that  
now is his love for thee, he will greet thee with cries of gladness.

- 14 Thins that were lost to the avenger: I will requite all thy company  
as they are, thou shalt be trusted with them no longer? only for thy per-  
secutors that hour shall be the hour of doom. Lame sheep, maimed, and  
wounded sheep brought home! Lands that despised them shall bear name  
15 and fame of them now. Name and fame you shall have, all the world  
over, the Lord says, when I call you back and gather you in; when you see  
the fortunes of Israel restored at last.

<sup>1</sup> Here again, in verses 17 and 18, most modern editors ignore the soundness of the Hebrew text, in the Latin version, the difficulties are partly dispelled.

## THE PROPHECY OF AGGAEUS

### CHAPTER 1

**I**T was in the second year of Darius' reign, on the first day of the sixth month of it, that a message came from the Lord through the prophet Aggaeus; came to Zorobabel, son of Salathiel, that was governor of Judah, and to the high priest, Jozai son of Josedec. And thus it was: Word from the Lord of hosts to his people, that will not restore his temple, but cry, Too early yet! Listen, the Lord said to them through the prophet Aggaeus, Is it not too early yet for you to have made over your heads, and my temple is ruined? Think well on it, says the Lord of hosts; here is much sown, and little reaped, nor eating brings you a full belly, nor wine a merry heart; such clothes you wear as leave you shivering, such wages win as leave you at your own bottom! Think well on it, says the Lord of hosts; up to the hill-side with you, flesh and sinners cry temple, if content are you will, the Lord says, if honour are you will. So much attempted, so little attained; stone you brought into your houses withered at my breast; would you know the reason for it? says the Lord of hosts. Because ye your own houses ye run higher-shelter, and my temple is ruined. That is why the skies are forbidden to rain on you, earth to afford its beauty, fowls of heavenness lies on plain and hill, wheat and wine and oil and all the earth yields, man and beast and all they feed to win.

What made they of it, Salathiel's son Zorobabel, and the high priest, Jozai son of Josedec, and all the people with them? That voice they could not choose but heed, that message from the Lord their God sent to them by the prophet Aggaeus, and they were awe-struck of the divine warning. Yet here was divine encouragement; Aggaeus, the Lord's own messenger, gave them the Lord's own assurance he was at their side. So the Lord put heart into them, governor and priest and people alike; and they set to work building up the temple of the Lord God of hosts.

### CHAPTER 2

**T**HIS was on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius.

Afterwards, on the twenty-first day of the seventh month, the Lord sent another message through the prophet Aggaeus. To Zorobabel, and

<sup>1</sup> Literally, according to the Latin version, "Aggaeus, an angel from among the angels of the Lord," but this is probably due to a misreading of the Hebrew text.

- 4 Jones, and all the people with them his word was: Tell me, those of you who saw this house in its former brightness, what makes you of it now?
- 5 It is no better in your eyes than a very nothing. Take heart, Zorobabel: You, son of Josadak, take heart! And you, too, people of the land, the Lord of hosts bids you put heart into the work; it is not he, the Lord of hosts, at your side?
- 6 . . . the promise I gave when you escaped from Egypt; my own spirit shall be among you; do not be afraid.<sup>1</sup>
- 7 A little while now,<sup>2</sup> the Lord of hosts says, and I mean to set heaven and earth, sea and dry land rocking: visited all the nations shall be, hither shall come the prism the whole world measures,<sup>3</sup> and I will fill this temple with the brightness of my presence, says the Lord of hosts.
- 8 Silver or gold, what matters it? the Lord of hosts says. Rich are visited: Right this new temple shall be, he tells you, as never the first was; here, he tells you, his blessing shall rest.
- 9 Then, on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in this second year of King Darius, another message came from the Lord to the prophet Aggeus, bidding him, in the name of the Lord of hosts, make enquiry
- 12 of the priests upon a matter touching the law. And the question was this: Have it not earlier consecrated meat in the fold of his garment, and with this same fold chances to touch bread or flesh, wine or oil, or what food you will; does this food become consecrated thereby? And the priests said No. Why then, Aggeus went on, let some other man touch this food, one that is untouched by the contact of a dead thing, will the food be defiled? And they answered, Defiled it is.
- 15 Then Aggeus opened his mind to them: Here is a whole people, a whole race, the Lord says, that thrives defiled under my scrutiny. Never is an enterprise of theirs, never an offering they bring, but is defiled. But

<sup>1</sup> It looks as if some words had fallen out between these verses 5 and 6, including a word to govern 'the promise.' Some editions print the end of verse 5 as a parenthesis, and make the sentence run: 'The Lord of hosts bids you take heart and go forth: It is not he, the Lord of hosts, at your side! the word which I commanded with you when you escaped from Egypt.'

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'a single little while,' but the addition gives no satisfactory sense. The Hebrew text is difficult, and perhaps corrupt; the Septuagint Greek gives '(only) once more,' a phrase interpreted in Heb. 12.26 as looking back on the experience of Israel when the law was given on Mount Sinai (Ex. 19).

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'the object of the whole world's desire shall come.' The Septuagint Greek has, 'the choice (treasures) of the whole world shall come.' Either of these might represent the peculiar language of the Hebrew text, 'they shall come, the object of the whole world's desire' (which could just be preferred, 'they shall come as the object of the whole world's desire,' i.e., the temple). 'The brightness of my presence' literally, 'glory,' but the word, when used in connection with the temple, regularly implies a theophany; (cf. III Kg. 8.12, IIa. 60.2).

now, mark well how you thrive henceforward. What need would be of  
paine to set pillar on base, here in the Lord's temple, how fixed is with  
yeaser twenty-bushel heap of corn? Look close, and it was but ten  
bushels. Did you think to press fifty quarts here the vat? There were but  
twenty. Simons I sent and soldiers, sowed all your crops with seed, and  
you would not come back to me, the Lord says. Mark well how you  
thrive henceforward, from this twenty-fourth day of the ninth month,  
when you laid the foundations of the Lord's temple;<sup>1</sup> mark it well. Nor is  
yet has the corn ripened, nor yet have vine and fig, pomegranate and  
olive, had time to blossom; but on all these my blessing lies henceforward.

And this further message Aggurus had from the Lord, on that twenty-  
fourth day of the month, for Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah: Earth and  
heaven both I mean to set rocking; royal thrones shall be overturned, and  
the power of Gentile kingdoms brought to nothing; overthrowen they be,  
chariot and charioteer, down come home and rider, friend turning his  
sword against friend; but thou, son of Salathiel, says the Lord of hosts, is  
thou, Zerubbabel, art my servant still; on that day I will take thee to my  
side, keep thee there, close as signet-ring; it is a divine choice that has  
fallen on thee, says the Lord of hosts.

<sup>1</sup> This had been done in some sort much earlier, under king Cyrus (Ezek. 3.10),  
but the work was interrupted, and doubtless had to start again from the beginning.

## THE PROPHECY OF ZACHARIAS

### CHAPTER I

**I**T was in the second year of Darius' reign, and the eighth month of it,  
that a message from the Lord came to the prophet Zacharias, son of  
Baruchian, son of Addo. And thus it ran: Repend ye, ye men of  
Sion, ye have incurred the Lord's displeasure; and now this word from the Lord  
shall be proclaimed to you: Come back to me, he bids you, and I, he pro-  
mises, will come back to your side. Prophets there were long since, that  
warned those fathers of yours in his name, they should turn away from  
all living and rebellious thoughts; yet neither heed nor heeding, he says,  
would they give me; not for you to follow their example. Come, the man  
of an earlier day; prophets that spoke to them might not live on for ever,  
but warning of mine, promise of mine, entrusted to the prophets that  
were my true servants, live on yet. See how the fulfilment of them over-  
took your fathers, till at last they must needs repent, must acknowledge  
the Lord of hosts had not threatened them, sinners and rebels, in vain!

Then, on the twenty-fourth day of Selseth, which is the eleventh  
month, word came from the Lord afresh, and once more it came to  
Zacharias, son of Baruchian, son of Addo. A vision appeared to me in the  
night, of one that was mounted on a sacred horse, at a stand among the  
myrtle-trees, down in the Valley; and never a horse in all his company but  
was sorrel, none or white. Scarcely had I asked, My Lord, what he does?  
when the angel that inspired me<sup>1</sup> preached he would show me the mean-  
ing of it; and with that, my answer came from him who stood among the  
myrtle-trees. These have gone out on the Lord's errand, patrolling the  
earth. And to him, now, the angel of the myrtle-wood, these others made  
their report: All earth we have patrolled, said they, and everywhere is  
a misery, everywhere is ruin. Ah, Lord of hosts, my angel monitor said, with  
them never taken, never taken pity upon Jerusalem and the towers of Judea?  
Hark ye twenty years come and gone. And with that, the Lord answered  
him, gracious his words were, gracious and full of comfort. Cry it  
abroad, now, my monitor said to me, this message from the Lord of  
hosts: Jealous, right jealous my love for Sion's hill, deep, full deep my  
anger against the heathen that are so well content! I would have punished  
Jerusalem but lightly, it was these drove home the blow. And now, the  
Lord says, I am for Jerusalem again, bringing pardon with me; temple  
shall be built there for the Lord of hosts, Jerusalem shall see mine<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'the angel who spoke to me, he means off me.' The Hebrew can not also be rendered, 'the angel who spoke to me' (cf. Num. 22.6 and 9). But see note on 2.3 verse.

plummet busy once again. And this, now: A promise from the Lord of Israel: Yonder towns shall yet overflow with riches; Sion shall perceive comfort, Jerusalem be the city of my choice.

Then I looked up, and what saw I? Here were four horses!<sup>1</sup> and when I asked my guide what they should be, he told me. Upon these horses Judah, and Israel and Jerusalem were tossed about. After that, the Lord sent me another vision of four blacksmiths; What errand, said I, have these? a Whip, said he, yonder horns made both hands of Judah still raw, never a man might lift his hand; what should be the blacksmiths' errand but to turn them back? Told they must be hounded forward, the hounds. So that once more Judah to the winds.

## CHAPTER 2

WHEN next I looked up, I saw a man there that carried a measuring-line, as I asked him, whither he was bound? For Jerusalem, said he, to measure length and breadth of it. And at that, my angel master would have gone out on his errand, but here was a second angel come out to meet him.<sup>2</sup> Spend thou, said he, on thy way, and tell that people of thine<sup>3</sup> the full Jerusalem shall be, of men and cattle both, and it shall have none to hedge it in; I myself, the Lord says, will be a wall of fire round it, and in the midst of it, the brightness of my presence.

Away, away, from the north country get you gone, the Lord says; what if I have starved you, far as the four winds? Away with thee, Sion; captive wouldst thou dwell with captive Babylon? This promise the Lord of hosts makes: After . . .

. . . glory,<sup>4</sup> I hold his warrant against the nations that plunder you;

<sup>1</sup> The horses evidently represent four (or perhaps two) enemies of the Jewish people, but they cannot be identified with certainty.

<sup>2</sup> "Turn them back"; literally, "hous them away." It seems probable that there is an error in the manuscripts, and that some word more appropriate to the activities of blacksmiths originally appeared there.

<sup>3</sup> Although the prophet is given distinct visions, it seems that he only understands the meaning of it through the medium of the angel who "speaks in him" (cf. 1.9). This angel master creates and goes between humans and earth (1-2), he "goes out" from the divine presence, exactly like the departing spirit in III Kg. 15.22, with some revelation about the measuring of Jerusalem, but is interrupted on his way by the assurance that the city needs no measuring.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, "that young man" or "that child." Collectively the reference is to the man mentioned in verse 2, but more probably Zacharias is the "child," not in years but in experience (III Kg. 1.2).

<sup>5</sup> His plausible explanation has been suggested to account for the words "after glory" and it seems likely there has been an omission in the manuscripts; the word is, because Almighty God is the speaker in verse 4, and not in verse 2.

9 apple of my eye<sup>1</sup> he touches, that touches you. Lift I my hand, they shall be as great money that are your masters now; doubt shall be none it was the Lord who sent me.

10 Hie, poor soul, break out into songs of rejoicing; I am on my way, 11 coming to dwell in the midst of thee, the Lord says. There be nations a many that shall rally that day to the Lord's side; they, too, shall be people of mine, but with thee shall be my dwelling.

Doubt there shall be none it was the Lord of hosts sent me to thy aid.<sup>2</sup>

12 Such the Lord shall claim for his own, his portion is a holy land; still Jerusalem shall be the city of his choice.

13 Be silent, living things, in the Lord's presence; ponder in his holy dwelling all is still.

## CHAPTER 3

**A**NOTHER vision the Lord showed me; here was an angel of his, and before this angel stood the high priest Jesus, with the Accuser at his right hand bringing accusation against him. But to the Accuser the divine answer came, The Lord rebuke thee, Satan; the Lord, that makes choice of Jerusalem, rebuke thee! What, is not this a brand saved from the 5 ember?<sup>3</sup> Then, for he saw Jesus standing there in his presence very vividly clad, the angel gave it out to his attendants they should take away these vile rags from him; Gird of mine, said he, I have set by; thou shalt have new garments to wear loaned. A clean robe they should give him besides. And so, when the new robe was on his head and the new garments were about him, the angel of the Lord rose up and gave Jesus his 10 commission: My bestowing follow thou, my command keep thou, people of mine thou shalt govern, house of mine thou shalt have in thy charge, and in their company, that have stood about thee, thou shalt go. This for the hearing of the high priest Jesus, and others his co-nationals, names of good came all.<sup>4</sup>

11 Thus in I should bring hither my servant, that is the Day-spring. Since is here I will set before yonder Jesus; a sunne that bears seven eyes, device of my own carving, says the Lord of hosts. All the folk of this land I will 15 health in a single day. That shall be a day of good cheer, the Lord of hosts says, filled making glad with feasts under vine and under fig-tree.

<sup>1</sup> You "my eye" the Hebrew text gives "his eye."

<sup>2</sup> The sudden change of speaker perhaps indicates that, all through this chapter, we are reading a series of prophetic fragments, not a continuous prophecy.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Am. 4:11. The idea is not, in all probability, that of something rescued from a conflagration, but that of a log which is saved from overnight to light the morning's fire—Jesus is a link between the pre-exilic and the post-exilic period.

<sup>4</sup> The meaning of verses 8-11 will have depended on some kind of symbolical



## CHAPTER 4

ONCE the angel motioned me to my room, as though I had  
 lain asleep. Now, said he, what seest thou? Why, I said, here is a  
 lamp-stand with my eyes, all of gold. A bowl sits lamp-ornamented on the  
 top of it, and from the bowl run seven pipes, to feed the seven lamps that  
 crown it. And there are two olive-trees hanging over it, one to the right  
 and one to the left of the bowl. Then in my turn I asked a question of  
 the angel, Tell me, what does all this mean? What, said my master,  
 canst thou not recognise it? Not I, my Lord, I answered.

And thereupon the angel told me . . .

. . . What from the Lord to Zerobabel? By arms, by force nothing  
 camest thou, my spirit is all, says the Lord of hosts. Vain is covering  
 height of thine, great mountains; down to plain's level thou must stoop at  
 Zerobabel's coming; none from thee bequest quarry and smooth to be his  
 coping-stone, how fair, how fair? This message, too, I had from the  
 Lord: Yonder simple hand of Zerobabel has founded, hand of Zoro-  
 babel shall finish. No more you shall doubt that I come to you as the  
 Lord's errand. Humble fortunes of yesterday who dared belittle? Rejoice  
 they now, as the plumes at work in Zerobabel's hand . . .

. . . What should they be, those crows, but eyes the Lord has, glancing  
 this way and that to scan the earth?

Then I asked him about the two olive-trees, to right and left of the  
 lamp-stands: and there was more I would know. What of the two olive-  
 shoots, close beside the two golden taps that feed yonder pipes of gold?  
 What said he, canst thou not tell? Not I, my Lord, I answered. What is

with which we are no longer concerned. 'Names of good men'; literally, 'names  
 of signs.' 'The Drapery' seems a translation from the *Supernatural Goods*, which is  
 ambiguous, probably, in accordance with the Hebrew text, it means 'The  
 Branch.' See further §.11 below, and note. It is not clear whether the 'name' is a  
 fresh metaphor for describing God's service, or needs some other explanation.

<sup>1</sup> Vain is it to urge to interrupt the thread of the narrative, and some think they  
 have been accidentally misplaced.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, in the Latin, 'And he shall bring out a precious stone, and shall  
 equidivine grant to the grace of it,' in the Hebrew text, 'And he shall bring out the  
 stone, the eye, a scolding, Grace, grace to it.' It seems likely that the text has been  
 badly preserved.

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew text seems to imply that there were two shoots communicating  
 between the olive-trees and the pipes, as if to feed the lamps with oil. But the  
 text is difficult, and perhaps corrupt, nor does this image fit as well with verse 10.  
 Taking the Latin as it stands, we may perhaps conjecture that the two trees  
 represent the priesthood and the king, the two shoots (not mentioned earlier)  
 representing Jerusa and Zerobabel respectively.

should there be, he said, but the two newly-anointed ones that stand in his presence, who is Master of the whole earth?

## CHAPTER 5

ONCE again I looked up, and there before me was a scroll, that had wings to fly with. So when he asked, what saw I, A scroll, I said, that flies past, twenty cubits long and ten broad. Here it has, said he, that runs all the world over; thief is none, perjurer is none but shall be judged<sup>1</sup> by the truth of it. It shall go out under my warrant, says the Lord of hosts, making its way into house of thief, house of perjurer that sweeps my name, and clogging close till it makes my way of all, wood-work and stone-work back.

Again the angel visited me, and bade me look well at the revelation that was sent me. What is it? I asked. Barbed-measure is this, he told me, for it is nothing other, said he, than gulf of thine;<sup>2</sup> spread abroad over the whole earth. Then he lifted up the cover, that was a taker's weight of lead, and what should I see but a weapon slung there within? God-measure, he told me, is the name of her, and with that he thrust her back into the barrel, and flung down the cover of lead. And now, looking up, I saw two other women appearing, that had wings spread as in the wind, strong as a hawk's wings; and these carried the barrel off, midway between heaven and earth. When I would know whither they carried it, the angel told me, To Samson, where it must have a shining bulb for its shaft; it must be set up, and run on a pedestal of its own.

## CHAPTER 6

ONCE more yet I looked up, and had a vision of four chariots, coming out of a pass between two mountains that were all of bronze. Of the horses, the first pair were bay, the second black, the third white, the fourth a sturdy pair of roans. And when I asked of my angel monitor what these might be, Here be four winds, he told me, going out on their errands; their place is in his presence, who is Master of the whole earth. So out they went, chariot drawn by black horses heading northwards; the white followed these, and the roans turned southwards, the sturdiest pair of all . . .

<sup>1</sup> Derived of 'judged' the Hebrew verb has 'declared innocent'; it can hardly be decided what does not have some sense of coping.

<sup>2</sup> 'Gulf of thine,' presumably that of the Jews during their captivity. The Latin version here, following the Hebrew text, gives 'eyes' instead of 'gulf'; but 'gulf' is the rendering of the Septuagint Greek, and a very slight error in Hebrew script would account for the mistake.

... 'West out on their errand,'<sup>1</sup> fair to traverse the whole world through,  
And a great cry came to me,<sup>2</sup> See, where they reach the north country!<sup>3</sup>  
All is well in the north country, my heart is content.<sup>4</sup>

And a message from the Lord came to Zacharias: From you the emissaries  
of the called Jews, Hoidai, Tobias and Hidaia, will now start to lay  
this very day their stone, and make the way to the house of Israel, son of  
Saphania, whether they have repented, newly come from Babylon. Gold  
and silver thou shalt take from them, and make crowns, to crown the high  
priest, Jeream son of Jonathan...<sup>5</sup> This message thou shalt give him from  
the Lord God of hosts: Here is now taken his name from the Dispensing,<sup>6</sup>  
where his feet have trodden, spring there shall be. He it is shall rebuild  
the Lord's temple; builder of the Lord's temple, to what house he  
shall come! On princely thrones he sits, thence of a priest beside him,<sup>7</sup>  
and between these two, what harmony of crown! For Helira, Tobias,  
Hidaia, and Hana the son of Saphania, the crowns they gave<sup>8</sup> shall win  
remembrance in the temple of the Lord.

Men shall come from far away, to work at the temple's rebuilding;  
you shall not doubt, then, it was the Lord of hosts gave me my wages.  
Will you but heed the voice of the Lord your God, this shall be your  
reward...<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It seems likely that there is some defect in the text, which makes no mention of the bay horses, and implies (as it reads) that the riders first went southwards, and then went on in an unexpected direction.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'he cried and said to me,' the subject of the verb remaining unexpressed.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'they have given my spirit rest in the north country.' The issue is perhaps that they had succeeded vengeance (cf. *ib.* 1.2.18) but the interpretation of the allegory must have depended on a situation with which we are no longer familiar.

<sup>4</sup> It is possible that two crowns at once were set on the head of Jeream, as seventy were awarded Jesus. But it is more natural, especially in view of what follows, to take that some words have dropped out of the text, indicating that the second crown was the Zoroastrian.

<sup>5</sup> 'The Dispensing,' as in 3.8 above, is 'the Branch' (or, 'the Stone') in the Hebrew text. It seems clear that the first half of Zoroaster's name is intended to, 'Where his feet have trodden'; literally, 'from under him.'

<sup>6</sup> The Latin and the Hebrew are ambiguous here, the meaning may be 'he shall be placed on his throne,' or 'a priest shall be on his throne.' The latter sense is given by the Septuagint Greek, and those authors who adopt the usual interpretation are at a loss to explain what is meant by 'these two.'

<sup>7</sup> Literally, 'the crown,' but it seems fairly clear that the same persons are intended to sit in turn so, though with some obvious differences of circumstance.

<sup>8</sup> The form of the sentence in the Hebrew text suggests that the oblation of the Jewish people will produce some effect which will continue to be expressed; if so, we have to suppose another gap in the manuscript.

## CHAPTER 7

**I**N the fourth year of Darius' reign, another message from the Lord came to Zacharias; it was on the fourth day of Chisleu, the ninth month.<sup>1</sup> This was the occasion of its being sent: Seraiar, with Regemenelech and others of his company, sending envoys to inquire the Lord's decree.<sup>2</sup> A question they put to the priests, there in the temple of the Lord of hosts, and to the prophets besides: Must I yet mourn, yet rid myself of dullness, when the fifth month comes round, as my wont has been these many years past?<sup>3</sup> Then came this message to me from the Lord of hosts: Ask this, of priests and people both; was it indeed fast of mine ye kept, all these seventy years, the fifth month and the seventh observing ever with fasting and lament, yea, that when food and drink were set before you, ye shared them with none?<sup>4</sup> Behold ye, what warnings gave us by the prophets of an earlier day, when Jerusalem was yet safe and prosperous, she and the cities about her, populous the western valleys, populous the hill-country of the south. (Such was the word the Lord sent to Zacharias).<sup>5</sup> A message from the Lord of hosts: Come now, the axe award, the tender heart that pities a neighbour's need! Widow and orphan, the alien and the friendless, wrong no more; brother against brother plot no more! And would they hear? Should every shoulder from the burden, deaf ears they turned to him, hardened their hearts to admonition. Read his law they would not; food they would not, when the Lord of hosts inspired these older prophets to speak in his name. What wonder if his divine signs were accused? What wonder, says the Lord of hosts, if any of them, like a warning of mine, went unheeded? So it was I scattered them in unknown countries, left their land a desert, where none came or went; a land to this, by its own inhabitants laid waste.

<sup>1</sup> The interpretation of this verse is very doubtful; the persons referred to are not mentioned elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> The fifth month was that in which Jerusalem had fallen; it had evidently been a time of fasting during the Captivity; now that the temple is in building, they ask, should the commemoration cease?

<sup>3</sup> Literally, in the Latin, 'And when you ate and drank, did you not eat and drink for yourselves?'; in the Hebrew text, 'And when you ate and when you drank, were not you the eaters and you the drinkers?' A general accusation of selfishness is perhaps intended; cf. Gen. xliii and elsewhere.

<sup>4</sup> These three the words were included here by accident; if not, they are a somewhat confusing repetition of the advice in verse 1. It is clear that they interrupt the run of the paragraph; verse 2 and 3 are a message delivered (indeed three distinct) not by Zacharias but by the older prophets mentioned in verse 1.

## CHAPTER 3

**T**HIS word, too, came from him: A message from the Lord of hosts: <sup>a</sup> Great ruth have I for Zion, and now it glories me. To Zion I will return, so will his promise, and make in Jerusalem my home: The loyal city, men shall call her, and that mountain where dwells the Lord of hosts, The holy mountain. This, you: Trust me, those shall yet be aged <sup>a</sup> folk in the streets of Jerusalem, men and women both, that go and in hand, they are so bowed with years; thoughged they shall be, those <sup>a</sup> straws, with boys and girls at play in the open. And this: Hard is believed? <sup>a</sup> So now they find it, poor remnant of a people, but should I, the Lord of hosts, find it hard to perform? And this, you: See if I do not restore my <sup>a</sup> people from the east country and the west, bring them back to dwell <sup>a</sup> here, in the midst of Jerusalem; they my people, and I their God, in truth and loyalty richer to other land.

A message from the Lord of hosts: Take courage, then, you that will <sup>a</sup> hold fast by<sup>b</sup> the commands the prophets gave you, when the foundations of ponder house were a-laying, and the Lord of hosts had no temple yet. Before that time, labour went unrewarded, for man and beast, so <sup>a</sup> had perished were you, none might come at go in safety; every man, in those days, I left at his neighbour's mercy. But now, says the Lord of <sup>a</sup> hosts, this remnant of my people shall enjoy better fortune; a happier is seed-time in their. In fruit the vineyard shall yield, the land its harvest, heaven its rule, and all for this remnant to enjoy. Betwixt of Juda, betwixt <sup>a</sup> of Israel, by-words of misfortune once, when heathen folk fell to cursing their enemies: happy deliverance, they shall be names of blessing now! Your feet vanquish, go heavily on; he, the Lord of hosts, given you his <sup>a</sup> warrior for it. Time was, says he, when your fathers had ceased my anger, and I was ever plotting mischief against you; so resolve dost <sup>a</sup> To-day, for the good cause of Juda and Jerusalem plan I no less eagerly; vanquish your foes. And for your part, do as did honestly with your <sup>a</sup> neighbours, give over in your market-place the true, the salary reward; harbour no ill thoughts one against another, nor set your hearts on the <sup>a</sup> with falsely sworn; every deed of wrong is harmful to me, the Lord says.

And word came to me from the Lord of hosts, bidding me say this in <sup>a</sup> his name: Fasts you kept ever, when three months of the year, or four, or <sup>a</sup> six months or nine were gone, shall be all rejoicing and gladness for the men of Juda now, all high festival, will you but love true dealing and

<sup>a</sup> Literally, "I have pity" but the people of Juda could not be thinking, three and then, to prophets uttered two years earlier.

a peaceful way.<sup>1</sup> This promise I give you from the Lord of hosts: What  
a blissed things, them what fur cities, shall make pilgrimage yet! And ever,  
as birds come they flock, says pilgrims, Come with us, and witness;  
court us the divine favour, so the Lord of hosts repay we, says some-  
in man, Go with you I will. No nation so populous, no kingdom so strong,  
yet shall break itself to Jerusalem, to find the Lord of hosts and court  
a his divine favour. This, too. A time is coming, when there is never a man  
of Jewish blood but shall have two Gentiles at his heels, and no two of the  
same speech; clanging all at once to the doors of him, and crying, Your  
way is ours! The tale has reached us, how God is there to protect you.

# CHAPTER 9

**B**URDEN of the Lord's doom, whom tells it now? On Hadrach's head;  
2 Bey, and Damascus shall be its sitting-place; perfectly near in Hama,  
3 and proper cries of Tyre and Sidon, so fumed for wisdom. This Tyre,  
how strong a fortress she has built, what silver and gold she has amassed,  
4 till they were common as clay, as mire in the street! Ay, but the Lord  
means no disposition here; cast into the sea, all that wealth of hers, and  
5 herself burnt to the ground! At the sight of it, how Accaron tremble,  
how Gaza cower, and Accaron, for hopes belied, no chafe in Gaza,  
6 so treacherous left in Accaron now; in Accaron dwells a banned breed.  
7 So how will I bring the pride of yonder Philistines; smutch the blood-  
stained morsel from their mouths, the unhallowed food theirs no longer?  
8 earnest of our God he shall be that is left surviving, a clannish<sup>2</sup> in Jude;  
9 so shall Accaron be all one with the Jebusite. I have sentinals that shall  
watch to and fro, guarding this home of mine, and none shall take tail of  
it henceforward; my eyes are watching now.

9 Glad news for thee, widowed Zion; cry out for happiness, Jerusalem  
doctored! See where thy king comes to greet thee, a trusty deliverer; see  
how lovely he rides, mounted on an ass, patient colt of patient dam!<sup>3</sup>  
10 Chorus of thine, Ephraim, houses of thine, Jerusalem, shall be done  
away, how of the warrior to surmount peace this king shall impose on the  
world, reigning from sea to sea, from Euphrates to the world's end.  
11 How should they be ransom'd, but by the blood of thy covenant with

<sup>1</sup> A delayed answer to the question asked in 7.3 above.

<sup>2</sup> Some think this verse implies that the Philistines will be converted to Jewish  
manners, abstaining from meat with blood in it and other forbidden food. But it  
may be Philistia is compared to a house of pigs of Am. 7.15.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'a donkey'; but this makes the sense difficult, since soldiers, by  
a different pointing of the Hebrew text, would read 'a dam.'

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'and a colt, the foal of an ass'; the implication seems to be that the  
king will come in less than royal state. See Am. 9.9.

are, those thy fellow-countrymen, in watertown dangerous bound? To those 11  
 shattering walls, O patient prisoners, return; you have my warrant, double  
 recompense shall be granted you. How of mine is Judea, Ephraim my 12  
 shafts employ; Greece, look to thy sons when I match the sons of Sina  
 against thee, vexed in a warrior's hand! See him there, in visible form, 13  
 high above them, the Lord God, that relays down shaft of his lightning,  
 sounds with the trumpet, rides on the storm-wind of the south! He, the 14  
 Lord of hosts, will be their protection; with sling-stones for teeth, flesh of  
 gun ear they, drink blood like sucklers at their wine; not sacrificial bowl,  
 nor altar's horns, so drenched with blood. His own people, his own 15  
 sheep, will not the Lord God in that hour defend them? His own sacred  
 trophy themselves shall be, to this land of his beckoning all men's eyes;  
 a people how blessed and how fair! So well with corn and wine furnished, 16  
 both man and maid shall thrive.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER 10

FOR rain is spring when but the Lord intent we? He it is, none 1  
 else, fashions the storm-cloud, waters the crops on his farm or that.  
 Vain the false god's fawcoting, vainly discomf cheer us, and dream 2  
 delude, comfort they have none to give; such ways Israel has followed,  
 like a flock of sheep unattended, led to its cost. What marvel if my anger 3  
 blazed out against the shepherds? A reckoning I must have with yonder  
 back-gang; ay, the Lord of hosts would keep strict count of his flock, the  
 sons of Israel.

Who but Israel is the proud charger I will ride into battle? Corner- 4  
 stone, he, of the building, peg of the tent's rope, how that shall win the  
 day; spoils of the world be, none other, shall send forth. Warlike they 5  
 shall be that go out to battle trampling all before them in the mire; does  
 not the Lord go out to battle at their side? Well assured, their enemies  
 could get nothing win. Such aid the men of Judea shall have, the sons of 6  
 Joseph such deliverance; in play I will rescue them, and all shall be as it  
 was before I cast them off from me; I am the Lord their God, shall I not  
 heed them? Ephraim, of great warriors the poor! Glad all hosts shall be, 7

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'And the Lord their God will deliver them in that day, like the  
 flesh of his people, because (they shall be like) women of unbridledness that are  
 lifted up as a standard over his land.'

<sup>2</sup> A people how blessed and how fair's beauty, 'What is the goodness of a gift  
 what is the beauty of it? Or possibly 'of him,' but the word 'beauty' would be  
 out of place in this context.

<sup>3</sup> The reference of verses 11-17 is obviously the conflict between Jewish and  
 Greek culture did not make Israel's last great enemy there hundred years after  
 Zachary's time.

so when the wine-cup goes round; children of his shall suckle the sigh,  
and triumph lustily in the Lord.

- 8 Flock of my ramming, see how they gather at my call! Thriving now  
as they thrive long since, yet scattered through the world, in those dis-  
tant lands they shall remember me; with spirits revived, they and their  
9 children shall return. Back from Egypt, back from Assyria I will rammon  
them, rally them, to Galilee and Lebanon bring them home; and that  
10 home shall be too small for them. Crooked, yonder straits, the sea's wave  
shook, depths of the river disappointed of their prey! Assyria's pride  
11 brought low, empire of Egypt cut down! In the Lord they shall find  
strength, under his protection come and go; to ease the distant promise.

## CHAPTER 11.

- 1 FLING thy gates wide, Lebanon, for the fire to come in, and devour  
thy cedars! Lament, neighbour pine-tree, for cedar overthrow; these  
be lovely ones plundered; lament, oak of Basan, for the secret forest that  
is cut down! Hark, how the shepherd-folk lament, their flocks mangled  
gone, how roars lion for the thickets of Jordan stripped!

- 2 'This message the Lord my God sent me! To this flock that is a-dwell-  
ing for slaughter thou must play the shepherd. What, would they stay  
without remorse, yonder lands of the flock, sell carcass, and thank the  
3 Lord that so watches them; are these shepherds so unscrupled? Nay,  
I will be unscrupled too, the Lord says, to all that dwell on earth; I will  
leave every son of Adam at the mercy of his neighbour, or the king that  
rules over him, and no redress shall they have from me henceforward!

- 4 Four sheep fattening for slaughter, take charge of your flock I must,  
and two staves I made me, for the better-venting of it, one I called Beauty,  
5 and the other Cruelty. Before a month was up, of three shepherds I had  
rid them, yet had I no prisoners with them, and they of me grew no less  
6 wary. No more will I tend you, said I; perish all of you that will perish,  
be lost all that will be lost; and for the residue, let them devour one  
7 another; I care not. With this, I took up the staff I called Beauty, and cut  
it in two; is taken that my covenant with all the world should be null.  
8 Null it was thenceforward; and doubt they might not, the starlings of  
the flock that looked up to me, the Lord's word had come to them.

<sup>1</sup> The word used in the Hebrew text may mean either 'mangle' or 'magnificence.' In the present context, it may perhaps refer to the shade of the trees, now lost to the shepherds through felling; the beams have similarly been robbed of their cover in the thickets (dimly, 'the pines') of the Jordan valley.

<sup>2</sup> No plausible account has been given either of the meaning of this prophecy (verses 4-13), or of the occasion upon which it was delivered.



... And now, said I, pay me my wages, if pay you will; if not, say no more. So they paid me for my wages thirty pieces of silver. Why, the Lord said, here is a princely sum: they rate me at Threes (i) to the craftsmen yonder. So there, in the Lord's temple, I threw the craftsmen my thirty pieces of silver ...<sup>1</sup>

Then I took my staff, Cords, and cut it in two; in token that all is brotherhood was at an end between Judah and Israel.<sup>2</sup> And the Lord said, as One of a foolish shepherd thou must take it thee now. See if I do not as find me such a shepherd for this land of theirs, as will leave his sheep uncared, strayed sheep enough, hurt sheep unhealed; and such as are left whole, shed he will not, but eat over the fatted of them, mauling only the hoofs away. Out upon the false shepherd! that abandons his flock! A sword shall pierce the arm of him, and the right eye of him, till men is withered and eye deflected quite.

## CHAPTER 12

**B**URDEN of the Lord's doom, where falls it next! On Israel. Word from the Lord, who spread heaven out, founded earth, defines the life that leads to men! This is my decree, that Jerusalem's walls (ay, and the whole of Judah shall run those ramparts) be offered to all the nations round about for a spoil;<sup>3</sup> to all the world Jerusalem shall be a name unmoveably; left it who will, shall be torn unmercifully. See where they muster to the attack, all the kingdoms of the world! Time now, the Lord says, to shade steel and omen rider's wing; for Judah, the machine of my regard, the heathen must side in defiance. Vainly do yeader chieftains of Judah look to the garrison of Jerusalem to be their success, in the strength of the Lord their God; chieftains of Judah themselves shall be my instruments then, fire-brand in the forest, spark among the dry sheaves, to devour all the nations right and left of them. Jerusalem shall stand, when all is over, where Jerusalem stood: but to the country folk of Judah

<sup>1</sup> It is not easy to see who could be the craftsmen mentioned in such a manner, and it may even be doubted whether these very verses have not been misplaced. In Mt. vi. 19, 20, where they are quoted in a considerably different form, Jesus, our Zachary, is mentioned as their author. But see note there.

<sup>2</sup> If the text is correctly preserved, this part of the parable looks as if it related to a situation several centuries earlier than Zachary's time.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'spoiled that is an idol,' or perhaps (according to the Hebrew text) 'spoiled of adorningness.'

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'behold, I will make Jerusalem a burial of drunkenness to all people round about ay, and Judah, too, shall be in the rage against Jerusalem.' In the Hebrew text, a cup is probably meant rather than a barrel, and the second half of the verse runs, 'Ay, and against Judah, too, it shall be, in the rage ye, drunkenly' (*Qinah Jerusalem*).

the Lord grants deliverance first; then of David, citizens of Jerusalem, shall not boast themselves better than the rest.

- 4 When that day comes, lowest fallen among the people shall seem equal as David's self, and David's classmates a race divine, as though an angel of the Lord marched at their head.<sup>1</sup>
- 5 Never a nation that marched on Jerusalem but I will hunt it down, when that day comes, and make an end of it.
- 6 On David's clan, on all the citizens of Jerusalem, I will pour out a gracious spirit of prayer; towards me they shall look, me whom they have pierced through.<sup>2</sup> Lament for him they must, and grieve bitterly; never was such lament for an only son, grief so bitter over first-born dead.
- 7 When that day comes, great shall be the mourning in Jerusalem, great as Adamance's mourning at Magdala;<sup>3</sup> the whole land is mourning, all its families apart. Here the men of David's clan, yonder their women,
- 8 here the men of Nathan's, yonder their women, here the men of Levi's, yonder their women, here the men of Semei's, yonder their women;
- 9 apart they shall mourn, whatever families there be, and all their women-folk apart.

## CHAPTER 13

**WHEN** that day comes, citizens of David and citizens of Jerusalem shall have a fountain flowing freely, of guilt to rid them, and of defilement.

- 1 A time shall come, says the Lord of hosts, when I will efface the memory of the false gods; the very names of them shall be forgotten; banish, too, the false prophets, and the useless spirit they echo. Dumb not of them prophecy again, all men will turn against him, even the parents that begot him. Still at day lying, and in the Lord's name? Thus shall die for ill had with a Jew's father and mother like the life they gave.
- 2 When that day comes, never a prophet but shall rue the false visions he trusted in. Doubtful garb of verbiage each one shall throw aside. No prophet am I, but a simple peasant, that grew up to follow Adam's trail.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Verses 8-14, with the whole of chapter 15, seem to form a collection of prophetic fragments rather than a continuous prophecy.

<sup>2</sup> A variant (existing in some manuscripts) gives 'blest' instead of 'me.' The original, probably, is in less plausible, but it seems to have been correct in very early times (see Is. 33.31; also Apoc. 1.3).

<sup>3</sup> The reference may be to III Para. 33. 13; but many books were taught in the neighbourhood of Magdala.

<sup>4</sup> The meaning of the second half of this verse is quite uncertain.

Ask they, What wounds be these in thy clasped hands? That wounded was I, he shall answer, in the house of my friends.<sup>1</sup>

Up, sword, and attack this shepherd of mine, neighbour of mine, says the Lord of hosts.<sup>2</sup>

Smite shepherd, and his flock shall scatter; as upon the common folk my vengeance shall fall. All over this land, the Lord says, two thirds of it shall be forfeit to destruction, only a third shall be left to dwell there; and this third part, through fire I will lead them; purged they shall be as silver is purged, tried as gold is tried. Theirs as my name is call, their plea mine to grant; My own people, so I greet them, and they answer, The Lord is my own God.

## CHAPTER 14

THE Lord's appointed time is coming, when spoil of thee shall be divided in thy midst. All the nations of the world I will muster to the siege of Jerusalem; taken the city shall be, and its towers pillaged, and its women-folk made lack; of the defenders, half will go into exile, and leave but a remnant in the city. And then the Lord will go out to battle against these nations, as he did ever in the decisive hour. There on the mount of Olives, that faces Jerusalem to the east, his foot shall be set; so east and west the mount of Olives shall be cloven in two halves, with a great chasm between, and the two halves shall move apart, one northward, one southward. Down the rifts of that sacred hill-side you shall see, each of them a new landing to the east; see as you stand before the earthquake, in Gilead's time, that reigned over Judah; on, on he comes, the Lord my God, with all his sacred retinue.

Light there shall be none that day, all shall be frost and cold; one day a

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'between thy hands,' a difficult phrase most inadequately interpreted by some moderns as meaning 'on thy hands.' If the correct notion had meant 'between thy arms,' he would surely have said so, as in IV Kg. 2.24.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'my lover'; shadowed in the Old Testament this word always refers to false gods, as the 'lover' with whom Israel committed adultery. If the false prophet is referred to, it is not easy to see what injuries he had sustained, why any question was asked about them, what answer was expected, or what was meant by the answer given.

<sup>3</sup> 'Neighbour'; the word is not likely to be what the prophet wrote. Elsewhere it is only a legal term meaning 'a second party.' The second half of the verse may be a continuation of the story but if so the dislocation 'Smite' cannot be addressed to the sword, which would require a feminine, not a masculine formation of the verb.

<sup>4</sup> The sense of this verse is doubtful, and it seems possible the two words concatenated, perhaps the prophet wrote 'there shall be neither light nor darkness, still you shall.'

- there shall be, none but the Lord knows the length of it, that shall be neither daylight nor dark, but when evening comes, there shall be light.
- 7 Then a living stream will flow from Jerusalem, half to the eastern, half to the western sea, winter and summer both; and over all the earth the
- 8 Lord shall be king, one Lord, called everywhere by one name. What shall be the land's frontiers? The desert, and Gilead, and Samaria: that is south of Jerusalem. What of the city? It shall be built up high, and its true limits keep, from gate of Benjamin to main gate and outer gate, from tower of Hinnom to the king's wine-press. A populous city, no bar coming on it thenceforward; a secure dwelling-place.
- 9 And what of the visitation that shall smite down the sinners of Jerusalem? Waxed away the flesh of them, till they can keep their feet no longer; wasted away eye in socket and tongue in mouth, with great tumult of mind the Lord will because them that day, each of them laying
- 10 hands on his fellow, brother engaging brother in fight. Indistinguishable, shall sit about the ramping of Jerusalem,<sup>1</sup> and find the spoils of every neighbouring people amassed there, gold, and silver, and of raiment great abundance; but as for horse and mule, mule and ass, and all the cattle in powder-camp, these will have perished by the same plague as their masters.
- 11 Yet of all the nations that sent their armies against Jerusalem there shall be some remnant left; and these, year by year, shall make pilgrimage, to worship their King, the Lord of hosts, and keep his feast of Tabernacles. Come and worship their King they must, the Lord of hosts; also no ruin shall fall on them, all the world over. What then of Egypt's folk, that ruin have none? What if they refuse to go on pilgrimage? Why, for their neglecting of this feast, the same plague shall fall on them which
- 12 the Lord sent on the heathen nations aforesaid.<sup>2</sup> Be it Egypt, or be it any other nation, that will not keep the feast of Tabernacles, punished it shall be in this fashion as in that.
- 13 Spoils from the enemy's bridle-reins shall be consecrated on that day to the Lord's service, till there is never put on put in his temple but reins as the altar's bowls for continual<sup>3</sup> Nay, never put on put in all Jerusalem

<sup>1</sup> Yet about the ramping of Jerusalem? in the original simply 'fight against Jerusalem.' But it is clear from the context that we have gone back to the situation described in verse 5, when Jerusalem is enemy-occupied. The Vulgate here gives the form 'Judæa,' instead of the more usual form 'Juda,' perhaps with the idea that *Juda Machabæorum* is referred to.

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew text is obscure, and perhaps corrupt, but it seems most likely that the sense given above was the general sense of it. The Latin version gives no satisfactory meaning here.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'On that day that which is on the horse's bridle shall be holy to the Lord, and the cushions in the Lord's house will be like bowls before the altar.' The Hebrew text is usually interpreted as meaning that the bridle on the Assyrian

but shall be consecrated to the Lord of hosts, for any who will so come and take it and eat the victim in it; trafficking there shall be no more in the Lord's temple, when that day comes.<sup>3</sup>

of the houses (it is difficult to see what houses) will be sanctified, 'Holiness to the Lord.'

<sup>3</sup> This verse seems to imply that only consecrated vessels might be used in seeking the victim before a sacrifice; and further, that some change was made by the Temple authorities for the use of the vessels in question.

## THE PROPHECY OF MALACHIAS

### CHAPTER I

**H**ERE follows burden of the Lord's doom for Israel, that was attributed to Malachias.

- 1 Oh, but I have dearly loved you the Lord says. Would you know, whereas I showed my love, this will say; was not Thana brother to Jacob?  
2 Yet to Jacob I proved myself a friend, the Lord says, so fitted to them I have made a way of ponds mountain-side, of all his lands a dragon-  
3 haunted desert. Ay, but, says Solomon, what if we have fallen on evil days? Give us time to repair the ruins! Trust me, says the Lord of hosts, as fast as they build, I will pull down; land of rebellion men shall call it, breed  
4 the Lord hates, and for ever. Glad sight, to make you cry God praise from end to end of Israel.  
5 See to fathers, servants to master gives his due. Your father I, when is the honour, your master I, where is the reverence you owe me? Such complais the Lord of hosts makes, and to whom? To you, priests, that care  
6 so little for my renown. Ask you what cause was lacking, when the bread you offer at my altar is defiled, ask you what despite you have done me,  
7 when you hold the Lord's table a thing of little moment? What, no harm done, when victims you offer in sacrifice is blind? No harm done, when it is lame or diseased? Pray you, says the Lord of hosts, make such a gift to the governor you see, will he be correct? Will he make favourites of you?  
8 Ay, says the Lord of hosts, the guilt is yours. To the divine presence bring you, and not for pardon; which of you finds favour with him?  
9 Never a man of you but must be paid to shut doors, light star-dies, no friends of mine, says the Lord of hosts, no gifts will I take from such as  
10 you. No corner of the world, from sun's rise to sun's setting, where the seasons of me is not heard among the Gentiles, where sacrifice is not done, and pure offering made in my honour; so revered is my name, says  
11 the Lord of hosts, there among the Gentiles; and yet? That you should hold it so cheap! That you should think so yourselves. The Lord's table is desecrated now; it makes no matter what food lies there, or what the  
12 bones be! Greasy work, say you, and divide it with a sigh. Heat mingled, heat gone home, heat that is alling you present to me, and the bloodless offering with it. And should the Lord of hosts accept the gift you make him?

<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to know whether the prophet, in reference to his own day, is speaking there of the heathen sacrifices as if they were offered, nominally, to the true God, or of such sacrifices as were performed by the Jewish nation, in various (but hardly in numerous) parts of the world.

Curled be the banner that flies the Lord's gilt beam, when wars are a-  
paying, and all the while there is an entire beam left at home? Officers it is  
the Lord of hosts, the great King, no name in all the world so terrible!

## CHAPTER 2

IT is for you, priests, to see that this law of mine is obeyed. Give me  
I neither loved nor hearing, says the Lord of hosts, let my name go un-  
honoured, and with mine curses I will visit you; take my curse . . .<sup>1</sup> is the punishing of your head-  
bonnets. Arms of yours I will make motionless, bury your faces in dung,  
27, the dung of your own sacrifices, and in the dung-pit you shall go.  
So you shall learn your lessons; my law I gave you, says the Lord of hosts,  
is token of my covenant with Levi's family. Live they should and thrive,  
3 but the fear of me I enjoined upon them; none but should fear, and hold  
my name in reverence. Faithfully they handed on tradition, the lie never  
4 on their lips; safe and straight was the path they trod at my side, and  
kept many from wrong-doing. No assurance like a priest's for learning;  
5 from no other lips men will expect true guidance; is he not a messenger<sup>2</sup>  
to them from the Lord of hosts? That path you have forsaken; through  
6 your ill-working, how many a forbidden land! Nay, says the Lord of hosts,  
you have annulled my covenant with Levi altogether. What wonder if  
7 I have made you a laughing-stock, a thing contemptible in all men's  
sight, priests that so ill kept my command, so complacently gave reward?

Have we not all one Father, did not one God create us all? No cause, so  
then, for brother to despise brother, and annul the covenant by which  
we brethren live!<sup>3</sup>

Here is great wrong in Judea, here are foul deeds done by Israel and  
Jerusalem<sup>4</sup> Judea, that was once content to be set apart for the Lord, has  
profaned that holy name, allied himself by wedlock with an alien god.  
Deer of such a deed, set he or followed the ill example, shall be lost to the

<sup>1</sup> 'Gift,' literally, 'spoils'; 'curse,' literally, 'strike.' Some such content is  
evidently intended of Lev. 24. 16.

<sup>2</sup> The expression, 'take my curse,' is difficult to explain, except on the sugges-  
tion that a word or two has dropped out in the manuscript.

<sup>3</sup> Here, as often elsewhere, the Latin translates 'angel.'

<sup>4</sup> This verse does not seem closely concerned either with what precedes it or  
with what follows it. The prophet may have been thinking of other misde-  
meanors, such as those mentioned in ch. 2.

<sup>5</sup> This difficult passage, verses 11-15, is generally understood as referring to  
the betrothals of the Jews with surrounding nations; of ch. 2 and so. But  
Malachi's protest is concerned only with foreign brides, not with foreign bride-  
grooms; and he seems only to reprove those cases in which a Jewish wife has  
been divorced to make room for a Gentile one.

- dwelling-place of Jacob, for all his offerings made to the Lord of hosts.
- 11 And now, weeping and wailing, you stretch the Lord's altar with your tears! What marvel if I banish your sacrifices no more, gift of years is gone
- 12 and an appease me? And the reason of it? Because the Lord hearkens witness to her wrongs, that wife of thy manhood's age, whom now thou spurnest,
- 13 thy partner, thy circumcised bride! Yet dear of this is the same man as then, the will of him is unchanged; he asks nothing better, now as before, than to breed a God-daring race; to that will, sons of Juda, keep true.
- 14 Spare her not, the wife of thy manhood's age; what though the God of Israel gives thee leave to send her away if she seeks that thy garment of her, says the Lord of hosts, is yet stained with the wrong thou didst her. Will of thine forgoest, wife of thine sparest not?
- 15 Oh, but the Lord is weary of your doings! And little wonder, when you think as sons of him, styling yourselves, For is fair in the Lord's sight, and wrong-doing will thine him; God that judges us is true.

## CHAPTER 3

- SURE** where I am sending an angel of mine, to make the way ready for My coming! All at once the Lord will visit his temples that Levi, so longed for, welcome herald of a divine covenant. Ay, says the Lord of hosts, he is coming; but who can bear the thought of that advent? Who will stand with head erect at his appearing? He will pur men as a son of dance at the crucible, searching as the eye that follows me. From his judgment-seat, he will select that silver of his and cleanse it from dross; like silver or gold, the sons of Levi must be refined in the crucible, or they can offer the Lord sacrifice duly performed. Then once more the Lord will accept the offerings of Juda and Jerusalem, as he did long since, in the forgotten years. Come I to hold meise, not slow to assign the account, the adulterer, the hypocrite, all of you that deny him man his wages, widow and orphan robbers, the alien his rights, bearing no vengeance from the Lord of hosts.
- 1 In me, the Eternal, there is no change, and you, sons of Jacob, are unperished still. What though you have refused my claims, left them

<sup>1</sup> Literally, "Did not you men do [or, make]? And his spirit is left mourning. And when does one man seek, except the word of God? Guard therefore your spirits, and do not despise the will of thy youth. When thou hasten her, cleanse her, says the Lord, the God of Israel but wrong shall never [or, be, his] garment, says the Lord of hosts, Guard your spirits, and do not despise." The Hebrew text, which gives "be [or, be] garment," is even more obscure throughout; and numerous explanations have been suggested, without throwing much light on the passage.



unhindered, as your fathers did before you? Nay, says the Lord of hosts, you have but to relent towards me, and I, in my turn, will relent. Would you know the manner of it, bethink you that it is not for me, to wrong a God, as you wrong me; out of all question you wrong me, over your vines and first-fruits. Alas, here is sworn conspiracy! It is myself you wrong, the whole house of you! Do but quay your tale into the silver as I use, for my temple's needs, and see if I do not open the windows of heaven for you, rain down blessing to your houses' content! Men of mine I shall fill as the locusts;<sup>2</sup> and to your crops he shall do as being sowers (as all your countryside, I promise you, shall vine cast its fruits): the cry is of all nations you shall be, says the Lord of hosts, a land of content.

And now, says the Lord of hosts, your complaints have had their way as with me. Complain you did! Who serves God serves him for nothing; as what reward is even for keeping command of him, attending with sad mien the Lord of hosts? Here are good folk more to be envied than we, ill it seems that yet thrive, abusers of his patience that escape all harm! So as they used to talk among themselves, his true worshippers, till at last the Lord gave them heed and hearing; and now he would have a second leap in his presence of all that so worshipped him, all that prized his renown. Dear they shall be to me, says the Lord of hosts, when I declare myself as I am; never to loyal son was father more gracious; then you shall think as better of it, and leave them apart, the just that serve God and the slaves that are foes of his.

## CHAPTER 4

**TRUST** me, a day is coming that shall smite like a furnace; terrible they shall be before it, says the Lord of hosts, all the proud, all the wrong-doers, caught and not slight, and neither man nor beast left there. But to you that honour my name there shall be a sunnier of restoration, as swift-winged, beating redoubt, light-hearted as tripping calves as well you shall go out to meet it;<sup>3</sup> ay, and temple on your golden energy, opening as them like silver under foot, on that day when the Lord of hosts declares himself as he is.

You to keep the law ever in mind, statute and word I gave to

<sup>2</sup> Literally, 'You are cured with a cure' like Lutes, however, has 'with distress'. The meaning seems to be, not that faith is under a spiteful curse (which would destroy the logic of the sentence), but that the Jews have bound themselves under a curse to offer God unclean offerings, as in 1:12 and 2:13.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'like doves'.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, 'But to you that fear my name a sun of justice shall rise, and beating in her wings and you shall go out, and leap like calves from the stall.'

assembled lined through Moors, that was my sorrow. And before ever  
that day comes, great day and terrible, I will send Elia to be your  
prophet; he it is still reconciler heart of father to son, heart of son to  
father; else the whole of earth should be forfeit to my vengeance.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is not clear what kind of disagreement between the older and the younger generation, or perhaps between the just and the present, is indicated. 'The whole of earth,' or perhaps, 'the whole land.'

## THE FIRST BOOK OF MACHABEES

### CHAPTER I

NOW thus we see Alexander son of Philip, the Macedonian, that was the first to reign over all Greece. This Alexander marched out from his own land of Colchis, and overcame Darius, king of the Medes and Persians. Besides he sacked a many; nor any fortress might hold out against him, nor any king escape with his life; and so he journeyed on to the world's end, spoiling the nations everywhere; as his coming, silence fell on the earth. So great the power of him, so valiant his armies, what wonder if his heart grew proud? All those lands conquered, all those kings his tributaries! Then, all at once, he took to his bed, and the knowledge came to him he must die. Whereupon he summoned the nobles of his courtiers, men that had shared his own upbringing, and to them, while he had life in him yet, divided up his kingdom. So reigned Alexander the twelve years, and so died.

And what of those countries named prisons, such with a province of his own? He sure they put on royal crowns, they and their sons after them, so and so the world went from bad to worse. Begotten then from the womb of Antiochus a poisoned growth, Antiochus the second, that was called the Illustrious. He had been formerly a hostage at Rome, but now, in the hundred and thirty-seventh year of the Grecian empire, he came into his kingdom. In his day there were godless rulers abroad in Israel, that did not wait for a hearing. Come, said they, let us make terms with the heathen that dwell about us! Ever since we forswore their company, sought but trouble has come our way. What would you? Such talk gained credit, and some were at pains to ask for the royal warrant; whatever have was given; then, Greece urges they should follow if they would. With that, they must have a game-place at Jerusalem, after the Gentile fashion, ay, and go undistinguished; forget, on, their loyalty to the holy covenant, they must share in their lot with the heathen, and become the slaves of impiety.

And now that he was firmly established on his throne, Antiochus would be lord of Egypt, and wear two crowns at once. So, with overwhelming force, with chariots and elephants and horsemen and a great army of ships, he marched on Egypt, and joined war against king Ptolemy, that could not hold his ground, but fled away, leaving many fallen. So Antiochus made himself master of all the strongholds in Egypt, and ravaged it for spoil; then, in the hundred and forty-third year, he turned his victorious march against Israel. With all that great army of a

11 his he came to Jerusalem and entered the sanctuary in royal state; the  
golden altar, the lamp-stand with its apparatuses, the table where  
bread was set out, benches and golden and silver and copper and  
12 golden findings of the temple, all alike were stripped. Silver and gold was  
spared, nor any ornament of price, nor hallowed treasure could he but  
13 find there; and these laden he went back to his own country, first shedding  
a dust of blood, and spouting very blasphemously.

14 Loud mourning there was in Israel, mourning in all the countryside;  
15 wept ruler and clerk, pined man and maid, and colour fled from woman's  
16 cheeks. In Jerusalem were up the dirges, both as in her house discom-  
17 soling, here was a land that trembled for its inhabitants, a whole race  
covered with confusion.

18 Two years passed, and then the king sent his chief collector of revenue  
to visit the cities of Judea. To Jerusalem he came, with a great rabble at  
19 his heels, and was courteous with idle professions of friendship. Then  
he fell suddenly on the town and grievously maltreated it, slaying Israel-  
20 like a sheep, plundering the city and setting fire to it. Houses and an-  
21 nouncing walls of it were thrown down in ruins, women and children  
22 carried off into slavery, cattle driven away. And as for David's Keep,  
they enclosed it with high, strong walls, and strong towers besides, to  
23 serve them for a fortress; partitioned it with a golden-crow of stones like  
themselves, and made it fast, storing it with arms and provisions, besides  
24 the plunder they had amassed in Jerusalem, which they bestowed there  
as for safety. Alas, what peril of tragedy was here, what an ambush laid  
25 about the holy place, what devil's work against Israel! What a tide of  
26 guiltless blood must flow about the sanctuary, till it was a sanctuary no  
more! Little wonder if the inhabitants of Jerusalem took to flight, leaving  
their city to strangers; neither so monstrous her own children must  
27 forsake. Her sanctuary a direct wife, her friends all lament, her  
28 liberties divided, her greatness brought low! Her pride was the measure  
of that shame, her glory of that shame.

29 And now came a letter from king Antiochus to all the subjects of his  
realm, bidding them leave ancestral customs of this race or that, and be-  
30 come one nation instead. As for the heathen, they fell in readily enough  
31 with the royal will; and in Israel too! there were many that chose slavery,  
32 offering sacrifices to false gods and leaving the sanctuary unguarded. Both  
in Jerusalem and in all the cities of Judea the king's message published this  
33 edict; men must live by the law of the heathen round about, burn-  
34 sacrifices, offering and sacrament to God's temple should be none, nor  
35 sabbath kept, nor feast-day. And, for the more pollution of the sanc-  
36 tuary, and of Israel's holy people, altar and shrine and idol must be set  
37 up, swine's flesh offered, and all manner of unbelieved meat; children  
be left uncircumcised, and their innocent lives contaminated with rite-

abolishing all the law should be forgotten, and the divine precepts fashioned anew. Durst any neglect the royal bidding, he must die.

Through the whole of his dominions the king's writ ran, and communities were appointed besides to enforce it: no city of Judea but was ordered to its signification. Many there were, traitors to the divine law, that took their part, and much mischief they did, driving the men of Israel to seek refuge in hiding, where refuge was to be had. It was on the twenty-fifth of Chisleu, in the hundred and fiftieth year, that king Antiochus set up an idol, to deprive God's altar<sup>1</sup> of holiness: there were in every township of Judea, offering of incense and of victims before home doors as and in the open street; none a copy of the divine law but was torn up and burned; if any were found that kept the sacred record, or obeyed the Lord's will, his life was forfeit to the king's edict. Month by month such a death of violence was done, in all townships where men of Israel dwelt, and on the twenty-fifth of the month month was made as the day that overshadowed the altar. Death it was for women to have her child circumcised in defiance of the king; there is her own house she must be hung up, with the child about her neck, and the circumciser, too, must pay for it with his life. Many a son of Israel refused the unclean food, preferring death to defilement; and die they must, because they would not break God's holy law. Grievous, most grievous was the doom that hung then over his people.

## CHAPTER 2

**I**N those days it was that Maccabius came forward, son of John, son of Simeon, a prince of Israel's family; he was for Jerusalem no more, but would take up his dwelling on the hill-side at Modin. Five sons he had, Judas, that was also called Gaddis, Simon (or Thasi), Jaddis (or Machabeus), Eleazar (or Abner), and Jonathan (or Apphus); and these saw well what foul things were a-doing in Judea's country and the city of Jerusalem. Alas, what needed it, cried Maccabius, I should have been born into such an age as this? To see my people and the holy city still brought to nought, to sit by while the enemy overtake her, and in her very misery the alien had his will? Temple of hers like a chaff's lot disregarded, the treasure of hers into exile carried away; young and old, in the open streets of her, put to the sword. Never a rest in headstrong but only a parcel out her domains, grew rich with the spoil of her! Gone, all her fair adornments, the revenues is turned naught; laid waste, yonder sanctuaries, that was our pride and pride, by Gentile first dishonoured! And a would we live yet?

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Deut. xii. 17, Mt. ix. 17.

- 10 With that, they took their garments about them, Manassiah and his  
 11 sons, and went clad in sackcloth, mourning right bitterly. And now the  
 12 pursuivants of king Antiochus came to Modin; into cottage there who  
 13 might, he must do sacrifice upon the hearth, and burn incense, and leave the  
 14 following of God's law. Out went the folk of Israel to meet them, some  
 15 compassionately enough, but Manassiah and his sons firm in their resolve.  
 16 And they dragged out Manassiah from the press; a man of worth, said they,  
 17 and a great childlike those brethren and sons then have a way. Will  
 18 thou not be the first to come forward and do the king's bidding, with the  
 19 whole world, and the men of Jude everywhere, and what is left of Jeru-  
 20 salem? To be the king's friend, thou and thy sons with thee, gold and  
 21 silver and much else for thy reward! Good may the answer of Man-  
 22 asseh! What though king Antiochus have the whole world for his reward?  
 23 They the edict who will, forsaking the covenant his fathers lived by,  
 24 both I and son of mine, both I and classroom of mine, will obey the law  
 25 a hundred times to us. Mercy of God! What needs it we should leave his  
 26 will undone, his claims unheeded? To deaf ears king Antiochus pro-  
 27 ceedeth the sacrifice; no voice yet from the law's path, right or left.  
 28 Before he had done speaking, a few came to offer the false gods' sacri-  
 29 fice, there in full view of all, before the altar at Modin, to the king's back.  
 30 Manassiah took fire at the sight of it; one beam of anger his heart gave,  
 31 and his soul for the law could contain itself no longer; there on the altar  
 32 the sacrificer was slain. Nor spared he the pursuivants of king Antiochus  
 33 that rejoiced in the altar, too, he pulled down. Nor Phineas himself  
 34 struck a better blow for the law, when he slew Zambri, the son of Sadoch?  
 35 And now Manassiah raised a cry in the city, Who love the law? Who  
 36 keep the covenant unbroken? Out with you, and follow me! Be fled  
 37 he with his sons into the hill-country, leaving his possessions behind,  
 38 there in the city.  
 39 Many there were that went out into the desert at this time, for love  
 40 of truth and right; took children and women-folk and cattle with them,  
 41 and settled down there, outways in a forest of wilderness. But news of it  
 42 reached Jerusalem, and the king's men that were in David's Keep; here  
 43 were whole flocks in the waste country, and drawing many over to their  
 44 side. So they went out in pursuit, and offered battle on a sabbath day,  
 45 as it chanced.<sup>1</sup> What, still stubborn? cried they. Come out, and yield  
 46 yourselves to the king's pleasure; your lives shall be spared. But the  
 47 Jews' answer was, come out and yield to the king's pleasure they might  
 48 not; law of the sabbath not forbade it. So the attack began in good

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Num. 25. 7.

<sup>2</sup> The words 'as it chanced' are not in the original, but it does not seem to be implied that the king's men chose the sabbath day for making their attack.

renext; but the Jews made no resistance, never a stone flew, never a hiding-place of theirs was put in a state of defence; Die we all, they said, ye innocent men, and let heaven and earth bear witness, it was for no fault of ours we died. Thus, because it was a sabbath day when the attack was made, these were perished, and their wives and children and cattle with them; a thousand human lives lost.

Great grief it was to Mattathias and his company when they heard what had befallen them; and now there was high debate raised: Do we as our brethren did, forbear we to give battle for our lives and livelihoods, and they will soon make an end of us? Then and there it was resolved, if any should attack them on the sabbath day, to engage him, else they should be put to death all of them, like those heretics of theirs in the desert of the hills. Now it was that the Asidæans called to their side, a party that was of great consequence in Israel, leaders of the law men and scribes, and all who would escape from the evils of the time, made common cause with them, and came to their assistance. So, mastering their fears, they wrought indignant vengeance upon sinners that were false to the law, all they were fain to take refuge among the heathen; whenever they went, as Mattathias and his company, they drove the them down, and wherever as children they found undisciplined, from one end of Israel to the other, they circumcised by right of conquest.<sup>1</sup> Ever long, they drove the tyrant's wickedness before them, and to each good purpose that Gentile as was none, king though he were, could restrain the law's observance; against their workings the power of evil could not make head.

Meanwhile, the life of Mattathias was drawing to an end. And this as charge he gave to his sons: How he days when tyrant and blasphemer have their will, when all is calamity and bitter retribution. The more as season, my sons, why you should be jealous lovers of the law, ready to give your lives for that covenant your fathers kept. Your fathers, what as deeds they did in their time! Great glory would you win, and a durable name, let there be your models. See how Abraham was tested, and how as trustfulness of his was quoted virtue in him; see how Joseph in all as time was true to the commandment will, and came to be ruler of all Egypt. How was Phineas, our own father, that gave hot in God's cause, as and earned the right of priesthood indelible; and Joshua, that for his as loyalty was given command of Israel; and Caleb, that spoke out in the as assembly, what boldness was his! David, for the tender heart of him, as left a dynasty that still sets; for Eliaz heaven opened, that was champion as of the law; by Ishak Assaelas, Amiel and Mised overcame the famous, as our David's innocence might revealing sons devoted. No gratiation but as

<sup>1</sup> It is not clear whether we are meant to understand that Gentile as well as Jewish children were circumcised.

21 proves it; none they need for strength that trust in God. What, would  
 22 you fear the tyrant's threat? In doing and reverse his glory shall end; all  
 royal state to-day, and to-morrow there shall be no news of him; gone  
 back to the dust he came from, and all his designs brought to nothing!  
 23 Nay, cry none, take courage; in the law's cause rally you, in the law's  
 24 cause you shall win renown. Here is your brother Simon, trust me, a  
 25 man of prowess; to him may give heed, he is your father's care. And here  
 is Judas Maccabeus, from boyhood's days a warrior; let him be your  
 26 leader, and fight Israel's battles. All lovers of the law make him of your  
 27 fellowship; bring your country soldiers, and pay the Gentiles what they  
 28 have earned; yet heeding ever what the law enjoins. With that, he gave  
 29 them his blessing, and became part of his race. He was a hundred and  
 forty-six years old when he died; his sons buried him where his fathers  
 were buried, at Modin, and great lament all Israel made for the loss of  
 him.

## CHAPTER 3

1 **AND** now his son Judas, that was called Maccabeus, came forward  
 2 to succeed him; nor any of Judas' clan, nor any that had taken his  
 father's part, but lost him their aid still; night hardly they sought Israel's  
 3 battle. Hence was one that brought his race renown; as great a warrior as  
 ever deemed braveheart, or armed himself for the fight, as does need  
 4 to save his camp from peril. Lion-hearted his deeds, as lion itself more  
 5 relentless in pursuit. Trained he ever taught; on and hunted down, ever  
 6 with fire-brand the appearance of his people dislodged, all enemy was  
 7 none but was daunted by the fear of him, traitor was gone but fled in  
 8 confusion, so well sped be the work of deliverance. Great deeds, that  
 kings could himself, Jacob with emulation heard, powerfully both blessed  
 9 overseas! From city to city he went, ridding Jude of its law-breakers,  
 10 avenging the vengeance guilt of theirs had deserved; no corner of earth  
 but he was renowned there, for one that had been able to rally a daunted  
 people.

11 How sped Apollonius, that regarded a great force, of Gentiles and  
 12 Samaritans both, to fight against Israel? No sooner Judas heard of it,  
 13 than he met and routed and slew him; full many and fled none, leaving  
 their spoils behind them. The sword of Apollonius Judas himself carried  
 away; and this it was he evermost used in battle.

14 And next it was Seron, captain of the armies in Syria, heard what a  
 great soldier and faithful following Judas had; and nothing would serve,  
 but he must win renown and high favour at court by crushing Judas, and



all other his companions that defied the king's edict. So he made all ready, and marched in with a strong number of the saggedly at his heels, to be even with the men of Israel. As they at Bethoron pass they pitched, and there Judas met them with his company, no better than a handful. There, when they saw each a host facing them, went far cries of praise and cheer. What, they said to Judas, should we offer battle to foes so many and so strong, fairer as we be from a day of hungry marching? Nay, said n Judas, nothing forbids great numbers should be at the mercy of swords: what matter maketh it to the God of heaven, few be his soldiers or many when he grant deliverance? Armed might shall not win the day; victory is from above. What though they come to meet us in the proud confidence of superior strength, and think it an easy matter to slay us, slay our wives and children, plunder our goods? Life and loyalty as make, we will offer battle none the less; and he, the Lord, will crush them to earth as at our calling; never be afraid. And with that, all unawares, he fell upon n Samon and his army, that were crushed, were enough, by his onslaught, all down the pass of Bethoron he gave them chase, down into the plain, and eight hundred of them had fallen before ever they took refuge in the country of the Philistines.

By this, the neighbouring peoples had begun to take alarm, so formidable did Judas and his brethren appear to them, and the news of him n reached the king's court; all the world was talking of Judas and his victories. An angry man was king Antiochus when the news came to him; n he sent word round, and had all his army summoned together, a brave army, he was of it. The treasury must be opened, to provide the troops n with a whole year's pay, and keep them in readiness for every need. Why, n what was this? So heavily had Judas suffered, so great the discord he had caused by the abolishing of its ancient usages, that scarce revenue had come in from it, and the treasury was in default! Whence, now, to defray n the cost of that largesse he had made so often, and with as lavish a hand?

Here was the king in great confusion of mind; and his thought was, to n march into Persia and take toll of those countries; great store of money n he might there amass. But he left Lysias behind, that was a man of high n rank and royal blood, he was to administer all the business of the kingdom, from Babylon down to the Brook of Egypt, and have charge of n the young prince Antiochus, until the king's return. Half his army he n entrusted to Lysias, and the elephants besides; and he signified all that he would have done, concerning Judea and Jerusalem particularly. A n force must be sent to overpower all that fought for Israel, or were put left in Jerusalem, and make a clean riddance of them; no more of them must n be left; all through the country settlers must be brought in from abroad, n and the lands distributed to them. With that, the king left his capital of n Antioch, taking the remainder of his army with him; it was the hundred

and forty-seventh year of the captivity. Soon he was across Euphrates river, and on the march through the high countries.

- 21 Three generals Lysias appointed for the task; Ptolemy son of Dorymenes, Nicanor and Gorgias, nobles all that were high in the royal favour,  
22 with fifty thousand foot and seven thousand horse they were to march as  
23 Jews and make an end of it, as the king had ordered. So on they went,  
24 with all this army at their back, marched in, and pitched their tents near  
25 Bethsai, down in the valley. He were the traders all about were appraised  
26 of their coming, and made their way into the camp with great stores of  
27 silver and gold, and a variety of services besides, thinking to buy Jewish  
28 slaves; Lysias, too, from Syria and Philitia made common cause with  
29 the invader.

- 30 Judas, then, and his brethren found that matters had gone from bad to  
31 worse; here were the enemy encamped within their frontiers; they heard,  
32 besides, what orders the king had given for the destruction and taking  
33 away of their people. And the word went round among them, How to  
34 restore the lost fortunes of our race; now to do battle for people of war,  
35 necessary of counsel. So a general assembly was called; they must make  
36 ready for the fight, and pray besides, to win mercy and pardon. Now at  
37 Jerusalem; Jerusalem lay there, no city but a desert waste, not any of her  
38 towers came and went; her sanctuary defiled, her citadel garrisoned by the  
39 alien, she was but a haunt of the Gentiles. Sad days for the men of Jacob;  
40 pipe nor harp sounded there now. At Mithras, then, they gathered,  
41 looking across towards Jerusalem; time was when Mithras, too, had his  
42 place of prayer. All that day they fasted, and wore sackcloth, and covered  
43 their heads with ashes, and tore their garments about them.

- 44 What sights were these? Here, lying open, was a copy of the law, such  
45 as the heathen were ever making search for, . . . the remnant of their  
46 own images.<sup>1</sup> Here they had brought priestly vestments, and offering of  
47 first-fruits and tithes; here Nazirites were gathered, ripe and ready for  
48 the payment of their vows. And a loud cry rose to heaven, What shall we  
49 do for these, thy votaries? Whither escort these now? Sanctuary of thine  
50 is all profanation and defilement, priesthood of thine all unwary and  
51 degenerate. And now, see where the heathen master their armies to destroy  
52 us! Needs not we should tell thee, how murderous their intent. Loth, but  
53 for thy aid, how shall we resist their onslaught? Loudly their voices, and  
54 loud the trumpets rang.

- 55 Thereupon Judas chose out who should be their leaders, one with a  
56 thousand, one with a hundred, one with fifty, one with ten men to follow

<sup>1</sup> As the ancient stands, it can only mean that heathen paraphrases had substituted the scriptures, as being objects of veneration to the Jews as best than idols were to themselves. But it seems possible that the text is deficient.

him; he sent home, now, all such as the law holds exempt) all that had but as  
 just built house, or married wife, or planted vineyard, and whoever had  
 no storech in the light.<sup>2</sup> Then they moved camp, and pitched their tents in  
 northwest of Basmus. Now for glided Jabin, cried Judas, and have ye  
 heard! By to-morrow's light, ye must engage yonder heathen, seven  
 centuries to us, and to the ground we hold sacred. Better die in battle, as  
 than live to see our race and our sanctuary overpowered. Be it what it is  
 may, heaven's will be done!

## CHAPTER 4

**T**HAT night, a detachment of five thousand foot and a thousand  
 picked horsemen left their lines, under the command of Gorgias,  
 thinking to reach the Jewish camp and strike a sudden blow at it; for  
 guides, they had men of the Jerusalem garrison. But Judas had word of  
 it; so he went, and all his valiant company with him, to attack the whole  
 body of the king's army at Basmus, while the detachments of the camp were  
 yet scattered. So Gorgias, making his night attack on the camp of Judas,  
 and finding it empty, made no doubt they had given him the slip, and fell  
 to scouring the hill-country for them; meanwhile, came day-break, and  
 there was Judas down in the valley. True, there were but three thousand  
 at his back, for detachments and attack were ill arrayed; and here was this  
 army of heathen folk, both strong and well protected, with cavalry circling  
 about them, men hard to ward. But Judas cried to his fellows, What  
 would you be daunted by the numbers of them? Would you give ground  
 before their attack? Behold ye, what a host it was Pharo sent in pur-  
 suit of our fathers, there by the Red Sea, and they escaped none the less.  
 Now, as then, beseege we heaven with our cries; will not the Lord have a  
 mercy? Will he not remember the covenant he had with our fathers, and  
 now, this day, yonder army at our coming? No doubt shall the world  
 have themselves, but there is one claimant Israel for his own, and  
 grant her deliverance.

And now the heathen folk caught sight of them as they advanced to the  
 attack, and left their lines to give battle. Thereupon Judas' men sounded in  
 with the trumpet, and the two armies met. Round the Gorgias were,  
 as too enough, and took to their heels across the open country, round of  
 the pursuit even catching the hindmost. All the way to Qinesura they  
 were chased, and on into the plains by Idmusa,<sup>3</sup> Accura and Jarcia,

<sup>2</sup> See Deut. 20. 5-8.

<sup>3</sup> For 'Idmusa' some Greek manuscripts read 'Judaea.' Neither reading gives  
 a good sense, and it seems possible that the name of Accura, or some other Philis-  
 tine town, has been accidentally substituted.

10 with a loss of three thousand men. When Judas and his army came back  
 11 from the pursuit, Noc yours, he told them, to run greedily after the  
 12 spoils of the camp; there is battle still awaiting us over yonder. Noc the  
 13 army, in the hill-country, to Gorgias and his army; first meet you and  
 14 beat you the enemy, and then you shall fall to your pillaging unafraid.  
 15 Even as he spoke, they were wise of a company that watched them from  
 16 the hill-side. But by now the camp was on fire, and it needed no more  
 17 than the smoke of it to warn Gorgias of his defeat; that night took the  
 18 heart out of Syria, the more so when it proved that Judas and his army  
 19 were in the valley, all appointed for battle, and they fled for their lives,  
 20 down into the plain of Pithulais. So to the pillaging of the camp Judas  
 21 returned; what gold and silver they found there, what garments of blue  
 22 and sea-purple, what rich treasures! He saw there was singing of songs  
 23 on their homeward journey, as they praised God in heaven, God who is  
 24 gracious, whose mercy endures for ever. Here was a day of signal deliv-  
 25 erance for Israel.

26 And what of Lyfias? News reached him, through the servants, of what  
 27 had befallen, and he was both sick and sorry at the losing his own  
 28 will crossed, and his master's command ill carried out. So, in the fol-  
 29 lowing year, he made a muster of sixty thousand picked men, with five  
 30 thousand horses, to crush the rebellion; into Judaea they marched, and  
 31 encamped at Bethoron, where Judas met them with ten thousand.\* At  
 32 the sight of their great numbers, this was Judas' prayer: Blessed art thou,  
 33 Saviour of Israel, who dost make use of the servant David, a giant's  
 34 smit to overthrow! Victory thou dost give, even an invading army, to  
 35 Saul's son Jonathan and the squire that bore him company! So may  
 36 yonder host, left at Israel's mercy, unknown his confidence is strength and  
 37 in speech, strike terror into them, let their manhood melt away, as they  
 38 tremble at the approach of doom; sword of thy true lovers be their un-  
 39 doing, triumph-song of thy worshippers their dirge! With that, battle  
 40 was joined, and of Lysias' men, five thousand were left dead on the field.  
 41 What should he do? Here was his troops fled in disorder, here was Judas  
 42 in command of brave men, that would as soon have an honourable death  
 43 as life itself. Back he went to Antioch, and there levied soldiers for a  
 44 greater expedition yet against Judaea.

45 And now Judas and his brethren had but one thought; the enemy van-  
 46 quished, they would beset themselves to Jerusalem, to cleanse and  
 47 restore the sanctuary. So the whole army fell into rank, and they climbed  
 48 the hill of Zion together. What saw they? The holy place desolate, the  
 49 altar profaned, charred gates, courts overgrown with bramblewood, the

\* For 'Judas' the Greek manuscripts have 'Lysias,' and for 'Bethoron' 'Bethania.' Cf. verse 10 below.

front clearing or mountain plain, the priests' lodging is built. Upon this, as there was meeting of garments, and head garment, cloth they cast on shafts beaks, and fell face to earth, sounded the bugle, and raised their cries to as heaven.

And what did Judas? First, he sent a force to engage the altar's garden close, while the holy place was cleansing. Then he chose priests, with- out kin or kinship, and true lovers of the law besides, who themselves as cleansed the sanctuary, one say stone that was polluted with idolatry but they had it away into a place unclean. And next, he must concern him- self with the altar of burnt-offering, that was now all defiled. And it was as good reason they took; the altar must be destroyed, also the day when the Gentiles polluted it should be remembered to their shame. So destroy it they did, and laid up the stones in a place apt for their purpose, there as on the temple hill. There they must remain, until the coming of a prophet that should give structure, what was to be done with them.

Then they raised a new altar in place of the old, using stones that had as never felt the pick, as the law bade;<sup>1</sup> repaired shrine and inner walls, and as set both temple and temple courts off their defilement. Now appear as incense, too, the temple must have, lamp-stand, incense-altar and table be returned to it; incense be put on the altar, lamps kindled to light the as holy place, loaves set out on the table, and veils hung up; thus as length as their work was accomplished. On the twenty-fifth of Casius, the ninth as month, is the hundred and thirty-ninth year, they were better daybreak, and offered sacrifice, as the law bade, on the new altar they had set up. To This was the very month, the very day, when it had been polluted by the as Gentiles yore, as the same day of the same month, it was dedicated anew, with singing of hymns, and music of harp, rither and cythara. There as upon all the people fell down face to earth, as adore and praise the heavenly author of their felicity; and for eight days together they cele- brated the altar's renewal, burned victims and brought welcome-offering with glad and grateful hearts.

They decked the front wall of the temple, at this time, with gold crowns as and encroachments, reconstructed the gates and the priests' lodging score, and furnished it with doors; and all the while there was great-rejoicing among as the people; as for the nations of the heathen, they were bowed as none. No wonder if Judas and his brethren, with the whole assembly of Israel, as made a decree that this feast should be kept year by year for eight days together, the feast-day of the altar's dedication.<sup>2</sup> Came that season, from the twenty-fifth day of Casius onwards, all was to be rejoicing and holi- day. At this time, too, they fortified the hill of Zion, with walls and as

<sup>1</sup> Lev. ix. 30, 31.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. ix. 24, 25.

- 1 strong towers all about; never more should Gentile foot possess it. Judas  
 put a garrison there, and would have it strong enough to command  
 Belus; a bulwark Israel must have against attack from the borders of  
 Edom.

# CHAPTER 3

- GREAT indignation had the Gentiles that lived round about, when  
 they heard that altars and temples were standing as of old. Their first  
 thought was to rid their own territory of Jacob's house, and all at once  
 they set about to murder and harry them. So Judas must needs take arms  
 against them, Beas's race in Idumaea, and the sons of Acra's house, that  
 were keeping Israel's folk under strict siege; and singly he defeated  
 them. Nor might he overlook Beas's wife and the machabry they cherished,  
 nor rushing Israel at once more by laying an ambush in his path. Thence  
 he rushed into their strongholds and besieged them; he set them  
 under a tree<sup>1</sup> and burned the strongholds to the ground, with their de-  
 featers in them. Then he crossed over into Amman, where he encountered  
 strong resistance and a great number of men, that had one Timotheus for  
 their leader; often he engaged them, and at often put them to rout; when  
 he had defeated them, and taken Osee with his daughter's company, he  
 marched back into Judaea.

- But by this all the heathen folk in the country of Galilee were roused  
 common sense against their Jewish neighbours, eager to be rid of them.  
 And these, taking refuge in the stronghold of Dalithaim, sent dispatches  
 to Judas and his brethren. Here be all the neighbours, they wrote, banded  
 a together for our destruction. Even now, Timotheus at their head, they  
 are setting about the reduction of this our fortress; come speedily to the  
 rescue; they have taken most toll of our lives already. Slain, all these  
 thousands of men that had their dwelling in the Tobie country, carried  
 away, their wives, their children, and their goods; nigh upon a thousand  
 widows there and these have perished.

- This letter was still in the reading, when all of a sudden came other  
 news from Galilee, that gamozais rose about them; their message was,  
 Ptolemais, Tyre and Sidon were up in arms together, and all Galilee was  
 overran with heathen folk, bent on massacre. Gave tidings, then, the  
 Judas and his people; now they in high debate, and took counsel how they  
 might best aid their brethren in peril of assault. And now Judas must  
 share the command with his brother Simon; Pick thy men, said he, and  
 make for Galilee, while Jonathan and I march into Galilee. Part of his  
 army he left to defend Judaea, with Joseph son of Zachary and Amari

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jos. 6.25, 26 and other passages.

for his captain; Here is your charge, said he; and see to it that you do not encamp yourselves with the Gentiles while we are gone. To Simon and to Galilee three thousand men were allotted; to Judas and to Galilee eight thousand. As for Simon, when he reached Galilee, full many a battle he must fight with the Gentiles, that he drove ever before him, till he pursued them at last to the very gates of Ptolemais. Of the money, some to three thousand fell, and his men had the spoiling of them; the Gentiles in that district in Galilee and Artana he took home with him, and their wives and children and all they had; great rejoicing there was when he brought them back safe to Judaea.

Meanwhile Judas Maccabaeus and his brother Jonathan had crossed to the Jordan, and marched for three days through the desert. There the Maccabaeus came to meet them, and told them of all that had befallen their brethren in the Galilee country; how there were many whom their fellow citizens had brought to lay in such great fortified cities as Berosa, Boser, Alfina, Capchor, Magada and Canaia; besides many others cut off in the east of the Galilee towns. And to-morrow, he was told, the heathen mean to occupy those cities with their army, setting upon the brethren and making an end of them. Whereupon Judas and his men suddenly turned aside from their course into the desert of Boser, and took the city; all its menfolk he put to the sword, and carried off the spoil of it, and burned it to the ground. At night-fall they continued their journey, and reached the Isonia stronghold.<sup>2</sup> What a sight was this that met in their eyes, when day broke! A great rabble of men past all counting, that brought up wailing-ladders and engines, as if they would take the stronghold by storm. Here was the battle fairly begun; the cry of them went as high to heaven, loud as chariot-rail, and a great cry, too, was raised within the city. Now, cried Judas to his men, now to fight for your brethren's deliverance! And hard at the enemy's heels he followed, with three companies of warriors that blew trumpets as they went, and cried aloud in prayer. The name of Maccabaeus once heard, how fast Thimothaeus' army at his approach! How glorious the blow that fell on them, when eight thousand fell in a single day! Once more Judas turned aside, to Capchor took it by storm, slew men of it, took spoil of it, burned it to the ground; then on to seize Canba, and Magada, and Boser, and the remaining cities of Galilee.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The word 'Timothae' is not in the original; but evidently the stronghold was either the mentioned to come at above, or the one in which the Isonia of Boser had taken refuge.

<sup>3</sup> There is some uncertainty about the names here; 'Capchor' is perhaps the 'Capchor' of verse 24, and 'Boser' should perhaps be identified with the 'Bosor' (in the Greek, Borsos) of the same verse. Boser has already been destroyed in verse 23.

11 Yet, when all was done, Timotheus put another army into the field,  
 12 and occupied down by Raphia, across the stream. What intent? Judas  
 from the route he had now forced? Here were all the neighbouring  
 13 tribes assembled in great force, with blood support from Asubis besides,  
 14 ready to engage him; so not he expected to offer battle. What he, said  
 Timotheus to his captains, till Judas and his army reach yonder stream.  
 Cross he and challenge us, we may not speak beyond doubt he has the  
 15 mastery of us. Fear be the passage, and encamp on the farther side, then  
 16 cross we boldly, the day is ours. But Judas, when he drew near the  
 river, had muster-couriers in attendance by the stream, that were  
 charged to let none linger behind, but send every man across into battle.  
 17 So he crossed, challenging them, and all the army at his heels, and soon  
 enough the Gaditis host was routed at their coming; these went away,  
 18 and sought refuge in the temple at Carnaim.<sup>1</sup> Upon taking the city, he  
 burned its temple to the ground with all that were sheltered in it; so was  
 Carnaim vanquished, and could make head against Judas no more.  
 19 And now Judas gathered all the Israelites in the Galilee country, high  
 and low, with their wives and children, a whole army of them, to come  
 20 back with him to Juda. They journeyed safely as far as Ephraim, that was  
 a great city and well fortified, the very gate of Juda; turn to right or left  
 21 they might not, their road lay through the heart of it. And what men  
 they do, the townspeople, but stand to the defence of it, had barricade the  
 entrance with great boulders! Thereupon Judas made peaceful overtures  
 22 to them: Grant us leave, said he, to make our way through your country  
 to ours, nor any harm shall befall you; we ask but the right of passage, and  
 23 on foot. But open the gates they would not; so Judas made a cry through  
 in the camp, every man should go to the assault;<sup>2</sup> there where he stood; and  
 go to the assault they did, the fighting men of his company. All day and  
 all night they attacked the city, and Judas was given the mastery of it.  
 24 Never a male creature there but was put to the sword; the city was  
 plundered and pulled down; and so he passed on through the streets of  
 25 it, all paved with dead men. Jordan they must still cross, then by the  
 26 great plain that flows Bethsai; and to the last Judas went over to and fro,  
 rallying the strugglers and encouraging the people on their journey, till  
 27 the land of Juda was reached. Glad and merry were men's hearts as they  
 climbed up Sion mountain, and there offered burnt-sacrifice in thanks  
 for their safe home-coming, with never a life lost.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Verses 41-43. It is not clear whether Timotheus was taking the revenge of his appointment, or taking an issue from the course of events (cf. I Reg. 14-15, 26). Perhaps we are not meant to picture the evening as taking place unopposed.

<sup>2</sup> 'Go to the assault' literally, according to the Greek, 'to assault,' but of the use of the corresponding Hebrew verb in Job 12, 31 and elsewhere.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'thereat some of them had offered until all returned safe and sound,' cf. note on Job. 1, 15.



So fought Judas and Jonathan in Gilead, and their brother Simon in a Gilead at the gate of Ptolemais; meanwhile, what of Joseph son of Zechariah, and Azarias, that had charge of the garrison? How came to them of victories gained, and great deeds done, and nothing would move but they must make a great name for themselves too, by offering battle to the Gileadites round about. So Judas went out to the army, to march on Jamnia, where Gorgias and his men came out to meet them. Back fell Joseph and Azarias to the borders of Judaea in great disorder, with a loss to Israel of two thousand men; such defeat they brought on our arms, because they would not fight as Judas and his brethren, but must be great warriors like the rest. None of that race they spring that should afford a true deliverance.

But as for Judas and his company,<sup>1</sup> they were held high in honour, as both among Israelite folk, and wherever the reports of them was heard; all looked to greet them with cries of welcome. But still he and his brethren would be on the march, reducing the men of Edom to the same company; so Nabon and his daughter took him the hire fell, neither will our power of it but was turned to the ground. Then he moved a camp, to march on Philistia, and would make his way through Samaria.<sup>2</sup> Prisoners there were that took up arms and fell in battle that day, only a defence of a warrior's renown.<sup>3</sup> And now Judas turned aside to Azarias, as in the country of the Philistines; there he pulled down, images of their gods burned to ashes, gave up their cities to plunder, and so came back again to the land of Judea.

## CHAPTER 6

KING ANTIOCHUS was still on his journey through the high countries, when he found still of a city in Parthia called Elymais, recovered for its treasures of silver and gold: here was a temple of great magnificence, that had golden images in it, brass plates and shields left there by Philo's son, Alexander of Macedonia, the first emperor of Greece. Thither he marched, intent on seizing the city and plundering it; but when he might see, because the townfolk had news of his purpose, and came out

<sup>1</sup> 'Judas and his company', the Latin here has 'the men of Judah' which yields no good sense, 'Judas' and 'company' being inseparable terms at this period. The Greek has, 'the man Judas and his brethren.'

<sup>2</sup> 'Samaria' is probably a false reading for 'Martha', which lay on the route between Edom and the Philistines.

<sup>3</sup> Most of the Greek manuscripts have a different and very curious reading, 'Prisoners there were that fell in battle that day, because he (Judas) desired to give the women, with which things he went into action unadornedly.'

to offer battle. So he was put to the rout, and must take himself back to Babylon, grievously disappointed.

And here, in the Persian country, a messenger reached him with tidings from Juda. Hiel went his way, and Lysias, that meanwhile marched out with to leave a remnant, had left the Jews masters of the field. How they were strong and well-armed, such spoil they had taken from the armies they overthrew; gone was that dishing image he had set up near the altar at Jerusalem; high walls, as of old, protected the sanctuary; nay, they had made shift to fortify his own stronghold of Bethsura.

What news was this! The king was all bewilderment and consternation; he took to his bed, fallen into a decline for very sadness that his hopes had failed him. Long time he languished under the double burden of his grief, and knew at last he was n-dying. So he called his friends about him, and bade them farewell. Here is sleep quite gone from me, said he; so I clove to this heart of mine with doles unrelaxed. Thus runs my thought: How comes it that I have fallen upon such evil days, such a flood of calamity as now equally see, I, that in the days of my greatest loved ones reigned, and was well beloved? And now returns the memory of all the havoc I made in Jerusalem, spoil of gold and silver I reaped from it, stores of mine against the terrible, and for no fault. For all doubt, here is the cause of all these miseries that have come upon me; look ye, how I do consumed of grief, in a strange land! Then he sent for Philip, one of his nearest friends, and gave all the kingdom into his charge; crown and robe and ring he delivered to him, bidding him seek out prison at Antiochus, and bring him up as heir to the throne. Thus and there died king Antiochus, in the hundred and forty-sixth year of the Greek's empire. And Lysias, hearing of his death, recovered this same prison Antiochus, that he had brought up from boyhood, giving him the name of Eupator.

Meanwhile, what of the Jews that dwell about the holy place! There was the garbure of the chafed burning them in, seeking ever to do them injury, and to sustain the Greek's name. So Judas was fain make an end of them, and summoned the whole people to rally for the siege. Rally they did, and began the siege in the hundred and fiftieth year, with much a combining of catapults and engines. But some of the defensible slipped to our; and these, with traitors of Jerusalem stuck to support them, went off to gain the king's assistance. With them never being content, they asked, and do our brethren right? Jews are we, that resolved we would be loyal to thy father, his policy purchasing, his will obeying. What come of it? Our own fellow Israelites would have no more of our company, then all is they could lay hands on, robbed us of our possessions. Not as only, but all the country about them, their villainous treasons, even now they stand arrayed against the chafed in Jerusalem, ready to take it by storm.

and have fortified Betharam. Forceth their plans then must, and speedily, or as they will go further yet, and there will be no holding them.

Angered by these tidings, the king sent for all his trusted friends, for as his army captains and his commanders of horse, mercenaries, too, were as hired from foreign countries, and from the islands out at sea, till he as could put a hundred thousand foot and twenty thousand horse into the field, besides thirty-two elephants, leaved to war. Through Belam they as marched, and invested Betharam; long they held it besieged, and built engines to attack it, but these, by a brave sally, the defenders burned to ashes.

Meanwhile, Judas drew away from the citadel, and encamped at Beth-saidon, close to the king's army. Ere dawn broke, the king was awake, as and his men marching hot-foot towards Bethsacharam, where the armies made ready for battle, with a great blowing of trumpets. As for the elephants, they were bladded to battle with juice of grape and mulberry, and as so divided here and there among the troops. A thousand five-soldiers were assigned to each, in coat of mail and helmet of bronze with each wore five hundred picked horsemen; these were waiting ready for every as hunt as its season, and must go wherever it went, never leaving its side. On the back of every beast was a strong protruding tower of wood, cunningly fitted; and thirty-two valiant men were appointed to do battle from this height, over and above the Indian that was the beast's driver.<sup>1</sup> The remainder of the cavalry were stationed on either wing, to flank the as encamping host with a clamour of trumpets,<sup>2</sup> and hence them as they used light paked in their rank. Brightly the sun shone down on as shield of gold, shield of bronze, till all the mountains-side gave back the glancing rays of them, and danced like points of fire. Part of the king's as army was drawn up on the heights, part on the level plain; warily they came on and in good order; and over, as they went, murmurs of voices, as troop of feet, and clash of as as dashed the concupiside around them, as great yonder army was, and as valiant. But Judas and his men closed as with them, and gave battle; and of the king's soldiers, there were six hundred that fell.

What did Eleazar that day, the son of Sumus?<sup>3</sup> Here was one of the as towers that went decked in royal trappings, and towered high above the rest; There sides the king, thought he, and with that, he gave his life, to as win deliverance for his country, and for himself imperishable renown.

<sup>1</sup> The meaning of the original is, that each elephant carried no less than thirty-two fighting men. The expression is perhaps due to some error in the copying of the Greek manuscripts.

<sup>2</sup> There is no mention of trumpets in the Greek original. But the text is coherent, and perhaps correct.

<sup>3</sup> In the Greek, 'Eleazar Sannas' perhaps a corruption of 'Eleazar' (2.3 above).

10 bravely he ran up to it, close in the heart of the press, slaying to right  
 11 and left of him, men falling on either side, till he could creep in between  
 the very feet of the elephants; crouched there, and dispatched it, and so,  
 crushed by its fall to earth, died where he lay.

12 But now, finding the royal forces so strong, and so determined in their  
 13 attack, the Jews withdrew from the encounter. To Jerusalem the king's  
 men followed them, and now here was the king entrenched against Judaea  
 14 and mount Zion itself. With the defenders of Bethsura he had made  
 terms; yield up the city they must, so ill were they victualled for a siege,  
 15 in a year when the land lay fallow<sup>1</sup>: thus Bethsura was in the king's hands,  
 16 and he put a garrison there. But it was against the holy place itself that he  
 raised his arms, and long he beleaguered it; what catapults he brought to  
 bear on it, what engines! Flaw fiery darts, flow stone and javelin and  
 17 arrow from mangonel and arbalest, and the slings took their turn. As for  
 18 the Jews, they met engine with engine, and fought on day after day: but  
 the seventh year had come round, and what store was left in the city had  
 been eaten up by the new citizens swept from Gentile countries, so food  
 19 was none to be had. Only a few defenders were left in the holy place now;  
 the rest, overthrown by famine, had dispersed to their homes.

20 But Lysias could not wait; he had news from Antioch. That same  
 Philip, whom king Antiochus, on his death-bed, had appointed to bring  
 21 up the young prince as heir to the throne, was now returned at the head  
 of his army from the land of the Medes and Persians, and would this take  
 22 charge of the realm. So Lysias must break himself to the king and his  
 generals, with such words as these: Our plight grows daily worse; scant  
 food is left us, and here is a fortress well defended; all the business of the  
 23 realm claims our care. What remains, but to make friendly advances,  
 24 offer terms to the besieged and to all their countrymen? Once we leave  
 they should follow their own customs as of old, which customs neglect-  
 25 ing, we have brought all this ill-will and all this trouble upon us. King  
 and choristae fall in with his design; offer peace they did, and the offer  
 26 was accepted. So, upon terms with the king and his generals, the Jews  
 gave up their stronghold; and what must the king do, once he had set  
 foot on mount Zion and discovered the strength of its defenders, but  
 27 break his oath, and have all the walls of it pulled down! Then, with all  
 haste, he took leave of it, and returned to Antioch, where he found Philip  
 in possession, and levied war on him, taking the city by storm.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Lev. 154.

## CHAPTER 7

IT was now, in the hundred and fifty-first year, that Demetrius, the son of Seleucus, escaped from Rome and landed with a small retinue at one of the sea ports, where he was proclaimed king. No sooner had he set foot in the palace of his ancestors, than his men laid hold of Antiochus and Lyllus, meaning to bring them into his presence. But he was warned of it, and gave it ear, nigh of them he would have none; so they were dispatched by the troops, and Demetrius established himself on the royal throne.

To him came certain Israelites, enemies of the law and of religion, with Alkimos at their head, a man who coveted the high-priestly office. And then, in the royal presence, they defamed their own people: 'Hear ye, Judas and his brethren have made away with all thy friends, and driven us out of our country! Do but send some trusted agent to survey the state of it, the havoc this man has wrought upon our own persons and upon the king's domain; ay, and to punish his partisans, with all who comfort them. The king's choice fell on Bacchides, a counsellor that was loyal to him, and had charge now of all the rulers east of Sygambria. Of the havoc wrought by Judas he should be judge, and with him went the traitor Alkimos, now exalted in the high priesthood; thus should the royal vengeance fall on Israel.'

So they took the road, and reached the land of Judea with a great army at their heels. Scouts they sent out, to chastise Judas and his brethren with fair promises; but from these they got no hearing, the sight of their armour was enough. It was a company of soldiers that went out to meet Alkimos and Bacchides, asking for honourable terms; of all Israel, the Antiochians were foremost in demanding peace; 'Hear ye a priest of Aaron's line, said they, in ponder company, fear us no weakness from him. Fair is promise he made them, and swear they should take no harm, nor their friends neither; and they took him at his word. And what did he? A fall is riny of them he seized and put to death in one day. Not fifty the word was written. Bleeding corpses of thy true lovers they have strewn about on every side of Jerusalem, and there was none to bury the dead. After this, all alike dreaded the new-comers and shrunk from them; none was wicker trust our oath, when covenant and sworn promise went for nothing. So Bacchides left Jerusalem and pitched his camp at Bethanias, where he made search and laid hands on every that had deserted from his own army; some of the Jews he massacred besides, and had their bodies thrown into the Great Cistern; then he left the whole country in Alkimos' charge, with troops to maintain him. So off went Bacchides to his master,

- 11 and Alcimus continued to make the best of his high priesthood. He saw  
all the malcontents in Judaea joined to his side, and took possession of the  
country, to Israel's great mischance.
- 12 Little is heard of Judas, so we see Alcimus and his crew misbehaving the men  
13 of Israel as never the Gentiles had; from end to end of Jude he passed,  
exercising vengeance on such as had left his cause, till they might take the  
14 field no longer. Everywhere Judas and his company had their way, and  
the sight of it warned Alcimus he was no match for them; so he, too, went  
15 back to the king, loud in his complaints. Thereupon the king sent out an  
army for the people's undoing, with Nicanor at the head of it, that was  
one of his most notable priests, and had a grudge against Israel to satisfy.  
16 This Nicanor, reaching Jerusalem with a great army, made powerful over-  
17 a rises to Judas and his brethren, but treacherously. Need is none there  
should be blown given between us, he said. Let us come with a handful  
18 of men, and parley we together under safe conduct. Come he did, and the  
greeting between them was friendly enough, but Judas was like to have  
19 been seized, then and there, by the enemy; and when he had proof of  
Nicanor's treachery, he was in dread of him and would parley with him  
no longer.
- 20 Nicanor, then, his plot being now manifestly discovered, would take to  
21 the flight; it was close to Captivitytime that he engaged Judas, and his  
army, routed with a loss of five thousand men, must needs take refuge in  
22 the Keep of David.<sup>1</sup> It was after this that Nicanor made his way to mount  
Sion, where some of the priests and elders came out to greet him in  
friendly fashion, and there him how began-sapience was offered there on  
23 the king's behalf. But nothing could they get from him but mockery and  
contempt; he did despite to their sacred persons, and sent them away with  
24 threats. In his anger, he twice to them nothing would serve but he  
should have Judas and Judas' army at his mercy; if not, he would burn the  
temple down, as soon as ever he returned in safety. So, in high disdain,  
25 he left them; and the priests must take themselves back within the walls,  
or where they stood before altar and temple, praying very assiduously. Lord,  
26 they said, thou hast chosen this house to be the shrine of thy name; here  
thy people should offer praises, and use for thy favour. Do thou avenge  
thyself on chieftains and army both; tis they at the sword's point. Whether  
thou forget their blasphemy; should they escape with their lives?
- 27 After this, Nicanor left Jerusalem, and pitched his camp at Bethsoron,  
28 where he was met by a fresh army from Syria; Judas, in his camp at

<sup>1</sup> According to Josephus, who usually follows the second narrative closely, it was Judas who was defeated and forced to take refuge in Jerusalem; this would accord better with what follows, and it seems possible that the text has been incorrectly preserved.

Adasa, had but three thousand men. And this was the prayer Judas prayed: 'Thou was, Lord, when Sennacherib's men were laid in their blasphemy, and thy angel went to smite them down, a hundred and eighty thousand of them. This day a new army overwhelm with a our onslaught, and let all the world know what comes of threatening thy holy place; for his ill-doing, ill requite him!'

It was the thirteenth of Adar when the two armies met; were enough, as Nicanor's army was overwhelmed, and himself the first to fall in the encounter. Whereupon the rest, seeing their leader gone, cast weapons as they and took to their heels. For a whole day the pursuit of them went on, all the way from Adasa to the approaches of Gazara, and near there were trumpets sounding the loss and cry. Our name Jewish folk from all the villages round about, to head them off,<sup>1</sup> all at last they turned at bay and fell at the sword's point all of them, never a man left. Spoil of them as was plundered where they lay, as for Nicanor, the Jews cut off the head from his body, and that right hand he lifted up so defiantly, and took them away, to be hung up in full sight of Jerusalem. Glad were they were that day, and kept high festival, decreeing that never thereafter should the thirteenth day of Adar go unobserved. And for a little while so the land of Judea had peace.

## CHAPTER 8

JUDAS had heard tell of the Romans, and their prowess. Here was a powerful nation, that would exterminate overtures since the loss from such as crossed their friendship, plighting their word faithfully. A powerful nation indeed; what battles they had fought, what exploits achieved yonder among the Galatians, their conquered rivals now! In Spain, too, they had done great feats of arms; and at last, by policy and patient waiting, won over the whole country, made themselves masters of all the silver and gold that was mined there. Came peoples from far away, kings from the furthest corners of earth, to offer battle, they were overwhelmed and signally defeated; those sent to treat were content to pay yearly tribute. Had they not crushed and conquered Philip, and Perseus king of the Greeks, and all others that had levied war upon them? And what of Antiochus the Great, that ruled all Asia, and came against them with a hundred and twenty elephants, with horsemen and chariots, and a great army besides? The Romans overcame him, caught him alive, and demanded both from him and from his heirs rich tribute, and hostages, with other conditions of surrender; took away from him India, Media,

<sup>1</sup> 'To head them off,' the Latin has 'and round them with the horns,' probably through a misunderstanding of the word used in the Greek text.

and Lybia, that were his most cherished provinces, and gave them to a king of the Syrians instead. Later, word came that the men of Helios were for murdering him and making an end of them; what was the issue of it? One of the Roman generals was sent out to engage them; fell many in battle, wives and children were carried off into exile, goods plundered, the land conquered, its fortresses destroyed, and they are slaves to this day.

So it was with all the kingdoms and islands that defied their will; the Romans crushed them and took their lands away. But to their friends, that would live at peace with them, they were ever good friends in return. Kingdoms both lay and rose because their needs, nor any that heard their name but feared it; helped they any man to a throne, the throne was his; their good will lost, his throne was lost too; so high was their renown.

Yet, with all this, was never one of them that went-crozier, or went died in purple for his own aggrandizement. A senate-house they would have, where a council of three hundred and twenty met day by day, providing ever for the good estate of the commonalty; and every year they would elect one man with the rule and governance of their whole country, the non-obeying him, without any debate or contention moved.<sup>1</sup>

So now Judas made choice of two envoys, Epistemon, son of Judas, son of Jacob, and Javea, son of Gheson; to Rome they should go, and there make a treaty of good will and alliance. Hannu's task it should be to rid them of the Grecian yoke; then the Greeks it was plain they could expect nothing better than guiding slavery. So, after long journeying, to Rome they came, and were admitted to the senate-house, where they gave their message as follows: 'We have been sent to you by Judas Machabeus and his brethren, and by our countrymen at large, to make a treaty of alliance with you; this would they be enrolled among your confederates and friends. This proposition liked the Romans well; and they wrote back to the Jews on a tablet of brass, that should be kept in Jerusalem to serve them for a memorial, to this effect: 'Well speed they at all times, the Roman and the Jewish peoples, by sea and land allies; far removed from either be alarm of war, assault of the enemy! Yet if war befall, and threaten the Romans first, or any ally of theirs in any part of their dominions, such aid the Jewish people shall give as the occasion demands, as ungrudgingly. For the needs of the country they shall nothing fail or furnish, be it corn, or arms, or money, or ships, according to the agreement made at Rome; and they shall observe these undertakings with no thought of their own advantage. In like manner, if the Jews be first threatened, it shall be for the Romans to give aid as the occasion demands,

<sup>1</sup> These words record only the impression which had reached Judas; it is not necessarily accurate in all points.



most willingly; providing neither corn nor arms, money nor ships, to any in that take part against them, according to the agreements made at Ramoth<sup>1</sup> and they shall observe these undertakings honestly. Upon these terms is the Romans and the Jewish people are agreed: if hereafter it should be in the will of both parties<sup>2</sup> to enlarge or to restrict them, they may do so at their discretion, and each relinquishing its jurisdiction shall have force accordingly. As for the wrong done by King Demetrios, we have sent him a warning, What manner shall we burden with so heavy a yoke the Jewish people, our friends and allies? Let them complain of their over-burden, and we will surely give them redress, by land and sea levying war against them.

## CHAPTER 9

WHILE this was afoot, news came to Demetrios that Nikanor and his men had perished in the encounter. But he would still have his way; Barchides and Alcimus should be sent back to Judaea, and the northern command<sup>3</sup> of his army with them. Marching on along the Orontes road, they encamped at Mandatha in Ashtola; the town was surprised, and many of its inhabitants massacred. Then, in the first month of the hundred and fifty-second year, they began an attack on Jerusalem, moving their camp to Beroa. It was a force of twenty thousand men and two thousand horses. Judah, encamped at Laisa, had three thousand picked followers with him, but these were greatly daunted when they saw what heavy odds were against them, and began to desert their lines, till no more than eight hundred of them were left. Out by one they slipped away, and ruler forth besides he might not, with the battle so hard upon his back; what wonder if Judah lost heart, and was unmanned? Yet said he to the remnant that was left him, Up, go we to the attack, and try our chances with the enemy! Is not he sought to slay us here? Speed we may not, they said; let us now our strike now, we may yet join hands with our brethren, and do battle hereafter; why, we are but a handful. Nay, said Judah, that may I never do; what, shall there our backs? If our time is come, die we manfully in our brethren's cause, nor rather say that thou art left on our cause!

By this, the opposing army had moved forward out of its lines, and stood facing them; here went the two bodies of horse, the slingers and

<sup>1</sup> The Latin has, 'according to the agreement made by the Romans.'

<sup>2</sup> Both parties; according to the Latin version, 'either party,' but such a suggestion would make the whole story absurd.

<sup>3</sup> The northern command; literally, 'the right wing.' Presumably this means the right extremity from Demetrios' point of view.

applies going on before the rest, and the choice troops that would bear  
 o the shock of the encounter: here was Bacchides himself, on the right  
 wing. This side and that the phalanx drew nearer, with a great blowing of  
 o trumpets, and Judas' men, they raised a great cry on their own part, till  
 the earth rang again with the noise of the two armies. Thus began the  
 o battle went on from morning till dusk. On the right, where he saw  
 Bacchides' army was stronger, Judas made the attack, and all the more  
 o valiant of his men with him; broke their line, and chased them all the  
 o way to mount Azotus. But now those on the left, seeing their right wing  
 o joined, cut off Judas and his men from the rear: now ended the battle  
 o in great terror, and there were many fall wounded on either part, till at last  
 Judas fell, and with that, all the rest took to their heels.

o As for his body, his brothers Jonathan and Simon recovered it, and so  
 o buried him where his fathers were buried, in the city of Modin. Great  
 o lament all Israel made over him, and long they mourned him. Here is a  
 great warrior fallen, they said, that once brought his people deliverance!  
 o What other leaders Judas fought, deeds did greatness achieved, you shall  
 not find set down here; too long the record of them.

o Once Judas was dead, there was no corner in Israel but confusion began  
 o to show its face there, and lawlessness to abound; under such leadership  
 the whole country, at this time much distressed by famine, went over to  
 o Bacchides. Good now he sought to choose out godless men, that should  
 o have the governance of his territory; and there joined a host and cry after  
 Judas' partisans, telling them before Bacchides he be punished and need  
 o dimlyfully: never, their prophecy died out among them, had the men  
 o of Israel known such distress. And now all that had loved Judas joined to  
 o Jonathan inwardly. Since thy brother's death, they told him, none is left  
 o to take the field against our enemies as he did, this Bacchides and all the  
 o that bear a grudge against our race.<sup>1</sup> There is but one way of it; this day  
 we have chosen thee to be our ruler, our captain, to fight our battles for  
 o us. So, from that day forward, Jonathan took command, in succession  
 o to his brother Judas. Bacchides no sooner heard of it than he marked him  
 o down for death; but of this Jonathan had warning, and took refuge, with  
 his brother Simon and all his company, in the desert of Tharcho. It was  
 o there, by Asaph pool, they halted; and it was there that Bacchides, well  
 informed of their movements, crossed Jordan at the head of his army and  
 came upon them, one winter day.

o This was the manner of it, Jonathan had sent his brother John, that was  
 in command of the camp followers, on an errand to his good friends the  
 Nabataeans. They had brought a deal of their household stuff with

<sup>1</sup> The meaning of the Greek text is, 'all those of my own race that bear a grudge against us.'

them; would the Nabathaeans take it into safe keeping? But, as they went, as some of Jambor's folk came out from Abathco, seized John and all that he had with him, and went off with them. Afterwards, John and Simon heard that the men of Jambor had a great wedding towards; they must bring hence the bride from Nabathaea,<sup>1</sup> and with much pomp, because her father was a notable Chanaanite chief. So, to avenge the death of as their brother John, they climbed the hill-side and lay in ambush there. What a sight was this now their eyes! All manner of men and displays, the as bridegrooms, his friends and his brethren, passing on their way to the trying-place, with bearing of drums, and making of music, and all manner of warlike array! Then rose they up from their ambush and laid as about them, till many fell wounded, and the rest fled into the hills, leaving all their spoil behind them. So turned they wedding mirth into funeral as dirge, to avenge the murder of their brother, and withdraw to the banks as of Jordan again.<sup>2</sup>

Hearing of these alarms, Bacchides marched down to Jordan bank one as Sabbath day, in great fever. Up now cried Jonathan to his men; escape as our enemy we trust. Gone is the vantage we had till now; here is armed as fierce confronting us, and all around us is Jordan stream, Jordan banks full of marches and thickets; escape is none. Cry we rather upon heaven, as the deliverance out of the enemy's hand. So the battle was joined; and as here was Jonathan, showing all his strength to deal a blow at Bacchides, who declined the encounter! What did Jonathan then? With all his corn-as pavy, he leaps into Jordan. So now, to reach them, the enemy must swim for it across the stream.<sup>3</sup> A thousand men of his following Bacchides lost as that day, and was fain to return to Jerusalem.

After this, they took to fortifying the cities of Judaea with high walls as and barred gates, making strongholds at Jericho, Amman, Bethoron, Bethel, Thamnata, Phase and Thopa; here garrisons were set, for the as harrying of Israel. Betharam, too, Bacchides fortified, and Gama, and as the Citadel itself, keeping all of them well manned and provisioned; up, as and the great men of all the country round must yield up their children as hostages, to be held in Jonathan's citadel for safe keeping. Then, in the as second month of the hundred and fifty-third year, came an order from

<sup>1</sup> 'Nabathaea'; the Latin version has 'Nabatea,' presumably a copyist's error.

<sup>2</sup> *cc. 22-23.* This incident is given by Josephus as if it followed the events described in *verses 47-49*; but he has probably misinterpreted the sequence of the narrative. In *verse 22*, the Latin version seems to suggest that Jonathan asked the Nabathaeans for the loan of their equipment, but the account given in the Greek text is more natural.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'and they swam across the Jordan to them.' The Greek text has 'and they did not swim across the Jordan to them.' The meaning, in either case, can only be a matter of conjecture.

Alcimus, the dividing wall of the temple's inner court should be dismantled. The Prophets' Building<sup>1</sup> he had already cleared away, and began to dismantle, when himself was seized down, and all his plans interrupted. Dismembered and pained, he never spoke again, even to dispose of his goods, but died there and then, in great torment.

Alcimus dead, Bacchides was for Judaea no longer; away he went to the king's court, and for two years the land was at peace. But not long there was conspiracy afoot among the galled party; here were Jonathan and his men. Bring rescue of their safety; came Bacchides in again, he might seize them all, and make one night's work of it. To Bacchides, then, they went, and imparted their scheme to him; whereas he raised a great army for marching on Judaea, but first sent word to his partners there, bidding them seize Jonathan and his company for themselves. Word went abroad, and the plan miscarried; it was Jonathan's seized fifty members of Judaea, that were the authors of the conspiracy, and put them to death. Then, with Simon and the rest of his following, he removed to Bethbessen, not in the desert, and set about rebuilding it, to make a stronghold for them.

Bacchides had news of this; entering his whole force, and sending word to his Jewish supporters, he marched in and pitched his camp so as to surround Bethbessen. Long time he besieged it, and brought up engines against it; meanwhile, Jonathan had left his brother Simon in command of the city, and was roaming the countryside. When he came back, it was with a band of men at his heels; were he Otho and his clan, were he the men of Phasarus where they lay encamped; everywhere he laid about him, and still gained strength.<sup>2</sup> As for Simon and his company, they made a sally out of the town, and set fire to the engines; afterwards they engaged Bacchides himself, and worried him, so that he must pay dearly for plot and trust of him that came to nothing. So enraged was he with the malcontents whose counsel had brought him into Judaea, he put many of them to death, and was for marching home again with the rest of his following, when Jonathan, hearing of it, sent envoys to offer peace, and an exchange of prisoners. This offer he gladly accepted, and carried out the terms of it, giving his word he would do Jonathan no more injury so long as he lived, and restoring all the prisoners he had ever taken in the land of Judaea. So he took himself back to his own country, and never to come that way again. Israel had a respite from fighting at last, and

<sup>1</sup> The Prophets' Building (Geraṣin, *Wohl*) was presumably the same given to some part of Zerubbabel's temple; no allusion is made to it elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> The name Jonathan is not given, but it seems the natural one to supply in the context. Jonathan, perhaps through a misinterpretation, substitutes the nameless to Bacchides.

<sup>3</sup> Verses 59, 60. The original here is strangely worded, and perhaps corrupt.

Jonathan took up his dwelling at Machabes, whence he ruled the people thenceforward, riding the land of gedions folk altogether.

## CHAPTER 10

AND now, in the hundred and sixtieth year, came Alexander, a son of Antiochus Epiphanes, and took possession of Palestine, where he was received with royal honours. A great force King Demetrius levied, when he heard of it, and went out to give him battle; at the same time, he wrote to Jonathan, in such loving terms as should flatter his dignity. No time to be lost, thought he, in making friends with this man, before he takes to overthrowing Alexander against us; for wrong done to himself, and his brother, and all his race, he bears us a grudge yet. So he empowered Jonathan to muster an army, and to make weapons of war, as the sly of Syria; the hostages, too, in the citadel were to be given back to him.

When Jonathan came to Jerusalem, and read this letter aloud, not to the council only, but to the whole people, great was the fear felt in all who listened; here was Jonathan commissioned to levy troops by the king's own order! The hostages were surrendered without more ado, and given back to their parents; and he himself took up his quarters in Jerusalem, where he set about building up the city and repairing it. It is was the walls needed rebuilding, so he sold his workmen; on every side, the hill of Sion must be defended with heavy arms; and patiently they obeyed him. As for the sion folk that guarded the stronghold Bastilion it had left, they fled shamelessly; what matter if their posts were shorn off? They were for home. Only Bethanias was garrisoned now, and is that by traitors to God's law and commandment; it was all the refuge they had.

King Alexander heard of these overtures made by Demetrius; heard, is too, the story of Jonathan and his brethren, harder fought, and deeds done, and labours endured. Why, said he, this man has not his match anywhere; time it is we should court his friendship and alliance. With a due, he wrote him a letter, and these were the terms of it: King Alexander, to Jonathan his brother-prince, greeting! We have heard all of us thee, a man so valiant, and so well worthy of our friendship; in token whereof, we appoint thee high prince of thy own race thenceforward, and to have the title of the King's Friend. With that, he sent him a purple robe and a gold crown: Take over our part, said he, and hold fast the bond of friendship. So, when the seventh month came round, in the hundred and sixtieth year, Jonathan did himself with the sacred vesture as the start of that dwelling; an army he levied besides, and made weapons of war in great abundance.

11 Sift and serry Demetrius was when he heard of these doings; Here is  
an ill day's work, told he, to let Alexander Samual be in making alliance  
12 with the Jews, to his great comfort! From me, too, they shall have a mes-  
sage of merrity, they shall have honours and gifts; the Jews shall be my  
13 good friends yet. And thus he wrote: King Demetrius, to the people of  
14 the Jews, greeting! Here is welcome news we have of you; right well you  
have kept treaty with us, honouring the treaty when you might have taken  
15 part with our enemies. In that loyal mind continue, and your good  
16 offices shall not go unrewarded; much immunity you shall enjoy, much  
happens receive.

17 By these presents, I exempt both you and all Jews from the poli-tax,  
salt-tax and corn-tax: thus I remit and forgo, with my right as a third  
18 part of your steel-corn, and half your fruit-crop. From this day forward,  
now and for ever, I resign all this; from Jude and from the three customs  
19 of Samaria and Galilee! Lastly added to it, there shall be no toll-taxes. For  
Jerusalem, it shall be a place set apart, a free city with its own confines,  
20 mistress of its own rites and tributes; nor claim I any right over the  
city: there, I make it over to the high priest, to garrison it as he will.  
21 All persons of Jewish blood that were taken away as prisoners from Jude  
shall now be set free gainfully, and re-dispatch made on their revenues  
22 or ricks. Feast-day and new moon and sabbath, and all other such  
solemnities as are appointed to be observed, with the three days before  
and after the feast itself, shall be days of merrity and scruple for all the  
23 Jews in my realm, nor any business done or debate moved to their detri-  
ment at such times. In the king's army, Jews may be enrolled up to the  
24 number of thirty thousand, paid according to the common use of the  
royal troops; and the same shall be free to serve in all the fortified towns  
25 of our empire. Jews may be employed besides in all positions of trust,  
and appointed governors;<sup>1</sup> yet live still by their own laws, that have royal  
sanction in the land of Jude. The three customs taken from Samaria and  
added to Judaea shall be accounted part of Jude, under a single govern-  
ment, with no allegiance but to the high priest.

26 Ptolemais, with all the country that lies about it, I hereby convey as a  
free gift to the temple precincts at Jerusalem, to defray the temple ex-  
27 penses.<sup>2</sup> To this gift I add a sum of fifty thousand silver sicles yearly,  
28 out of the royal dues that belong to me. With this sum, arrears shall be  
made good in payments for the temple building, withheld all now by  
29 such as had charge of the matter; and provision made, so the priests now

<sup>1</sup> "Samaria and Galilee," have evidently retained as a single unit the three dis-  
tinct countries that had actually been Samarian (verse 19).

<sup>2</sup> "Such appointed governors," according to the Greek text, "and let their  
provinces be men of their own race."

<sup>3</sup> A few months cf. verse 1.

in office, for the five thousand talents that were confiscated year by year from the temple treasury.<sup>1</sup> Tribute to the king, whatever be the charge against him, that takes sanctuary in the temple or its precincts, shall be left at liberty, and no searches made upon goods of his within these dominions. Payment shall be made besides from the royal treasury for the finishing and repairing of the temple fabric; as also for building up and making strong the walls of Jerusalem, and increasing the fortresses of Judaea.

But in vain were such promises made to Jonathan and the Jewish folk, as our historians found they very soon forgot. Could they forget all the mischief Demetrius had done in Israel, all the tyranny they had endured? Alexander it was had all their good wishes; his was the first offer of terms or that reached them, and all the while it was his cause they cherished. By this, Alexander had increased a great fleet, and marched against Demetrius. When the two kings met, it was Demetrius' men took to their heels, and Alexander gave chase, pressing them hard; finally the battle raged till sun-down, and before the day was over, Demetrius fell.

Hereupon Alexander sent an embassy to Ptolemy, king of Egypt, addressing him in these terms following. Take notice I have returned to my kingdom, and sit now on the throne of my fathers, in full possession of my princely rights. Would I regain Syria, needs mean I should overthrow Demetrius; overthrow him I did, on field of battle, with all his army, and here I sit in his place. And should we not be upon terms of a friendship, thou and I? Let me have thy daughter to wife; a niggardly woeer thou shalt not find me, nor she either. And what answer made to king Ptolemy? An suspicious day, said he, this day of thy return to the land and throne of thy fathers! Soon thy letter told of our state that is here; but first meet we together, face to face, yonder at Ptolemais; there will I pledge my word to the articles thou demand. So here was king of Ptolemy come from Egypt, with his daughter Cleopatra, all the way to Ptolemais, in the hundred and sixty-second year; and there king Alexander met him and took his daughter Cleopatra to wife, and they held the wedding with great magnificence, as kings will.

King Alexander had sent word to Jonathan, he should come and keep company with him; so to Ptolemais Jonathan went, and met the two kings as there. Gifts a many he made them, of silver and gold and much rice, and was high in favour with them. It chanced that certain Israelites, perfidious fellows of the traitorous party, came there to bring charges against him. But so these the king would not listen; he would have Jonathan change his garments, and go clad in purple, and when this was done, a seat he

<sup>1</sup> See 25. 22. The Latin text differs from the Greek text, which is here illegible.

as must have beside the king himself. Take him out into the heart of the city, Alexander said to his friends, and there make proclamations, none may bring charge against him on any pretext, or in any fashion molest or him. No thought had his accusers, when they heard such proclamations made, and saw Jonathan there dressed in purple, but to escape, and as and all, as best they could; he himself was loaded with harness, surrounded among the king's chief friends, and made a prince, with a share in the government of the kingdom. So Jonathan made his way back to Jerusalem undisturbed, and well content.

Then, in the hundred and sixty-fifth year, came Demetrius, son of that other Demetrius, from the island of Crete, and landed in his native country, all hearing indeed for Alexander, who returned at once to Antioch. Demetrius<sup>1</sup> gave command of his army to Apollonius, that was governor of Cilicia, and a great army it was he led. From Jamnia, where he took up his quarters, this Apollonius went west to the high place: Jamnia there. What, with these cities on, and all stores? Here am I mocked and scorned by the resistance offered me, up yonder in the hills? Nay, if such confidence thou hast in thy own resources, come down and meet us in the plain; try we conclusions there! Trust me, I am master of the field; what I am, what my troops are, thou shalt learn upon a little enquiry; stand thou closest now, they will sell thee, before onslaught of ours. Twice, on their native soil, thy fathers died in disorders, and wilt thou make head against such an army of horse and foot, here in the plain, where rock is none, nor guard-hill, to aid thy flight?

Roused by this challenge, Jonathan marched out from Jerusalem with a number of ten thousand men; his brother Simon joined hands with him; and together they appeared before the gates of Joppa. Hither they might not, for Apollonius had a garrison there, but men were armed in, whereupon the citizens took alarm, and themselves opened the gates. Thus came Joppa into the power of Jonathan; the news reached Apollonius, and he brought up three thousand horse, with a great army of men besides. To Ascora he marched, as if he meant to pass them by, but all the while he was luring them on into the plain;<sup>2</sup> in haste lay his strength and his confidence. To Ascora Jonathan followed him, and battle was joined. Apollonius, by a secret hint, had left a thousand horsemen encamped as in their rear; so all at once Jonathan found himself cut off by an ambush.

<sup>1</sup> It seems possible that the word 'Demetrius' may have been inserted for the sake of distinction, Jonathan traces Apollonius throughout to fighting on the side of Alexander in 158 of 159.

<sup>2</sup> All the time for was luring them on into the plain; this seems to be the meaning of the Greek text, although Joppa and Ascora were both on the sea-board, far away from any hill-country. The Latin has 'immediately he went out into the plain; which yields no satisfactory sense.



Round his army they rode, casting javelins into the ranks, then shouting all night-long; but over it stood Sam, at Jonathan's bidding, till the horses were tired out at last. Then, the force of the cavalry once spent, out came Simon with his troops to attack the main body, which charged on horse and fled. Scattered over the open country, in vain they rallied at *Asorai*, and took refuge in the precincts of their god *Dagon*; both *Asorai* and all the neighbouring cities Jonathan burnt and plundered, and *Dagon's* temple, with all that took shelter there, was burnt with the rest. So perished, by sword and fire, some eight thousand men: as for *Jonas*, then, he had no longer managed before *Asorai*, than the townsfolk opened the gates to him, and gave him honourable welcome.

So Jeremiah came back to Jerusalem, and the army behind him, laden as with spoils. More than ever, when he heard of it, did king Alexander as he lay honour upon him; a bundle of gold he sent him, over the gift things as make in even of blood royal, and Accaron, with all the countryside about it, crowned him for his doings.

## CHAPTER 11

AND now Ptolemy, king of Egypt, levied a great army, countless as sand on the beach, and a fleet besides, to win Alexander's realm his treacherous design was, and add it to his own. To Syria he came, full of fair speeches, and all the towns opened their gates to welcome him with welcome. Alexander himself had grown fond; was not the king of Egypt his father-in-law? And when a town king Ptolemy entered, but he left a guard of soldiers there. When he reached Acornia, here was Dagon's temple ruins, here was the town itself and all its neighborhood in ruins; the dead lay unburied, where they fell in battle, or in heaps by the roadside. All this they showed him, and told him, with malicious intent, how it was Jonathan's doing; but no word said king Ptolemy. As for Jonathan, he went to meet the king at Egypt, with a deal of pomp; there they greeted one another, and passed the night, nor would Jonathan return to Jerusalem till he had escorted the king as far as the river called Eleutherus.

All the rivers of the sea coast, as far as maritime Seleucia, king Probus escaped, and with no friendly purpose towards Alexander; it was to Demetrius he sent envoys (attend, Coena, said he, a pact between us! My daughter thou shalt have in Alexander's place, and therewithal the throne of thy father; here is an ill son-in-law I have chosen, that went about but now to kill me! Thus, to find pretext for dethroning his rival, king Probus defamed him, took his daughter away, and gave her to Demetrius. His arrangement from Alexander now came to an open breach, what could he do next but enter the city of Antioch, and there assume the

10 a double crown, as ruler of Egypt and Asia both? As for Alexander, that  
 11 was then in Cilicia, quelling a revolt in those parts, he came on to do  
 12 battle when the news reached him, but Ptolemy brought up his army,  
 13 met him with a superior force, and scored him. Thus Egypt had the  
 14 mastery; and when Alexander fled to Arabia for refuge, Zabdiel, an  
 15 Arabian, cut off his head and sent it to the conqueror. Three days later,  
 16 Ptolemy himself lay dead; whereupon the governors he had left in the  
 17 towns were massacred by the citizens, and the royal power passed to  
 18 Demetrius in this, the hundred and sixty-seventh year.

19 Now it was that Jonathan married the man of Judaea to deliver an  
 20 attack on the Gentile circle in Jerusalem; engines a many they brought  
 21 against it. Not without their fear of the godless party, traitors to their  
 22 own race, that went off and told Demetrius it was being attacked: the  
 23 news greatly angered him, and he hastened to Ptolemais, bidding Jona-  
 24 than raise the siege and come to meet him without more ado. This  
 25 message notwithstanding, Jonathan would have the siege go forward;  
 26 certain edicts of Israel, and certain of the priests, he chose out to bear  
 27 him company, and so put his own life in peril, going off to meet the king  
 28 at Ptolemais, with gold and silver and garments and other gifts in great  
 29 number. He was received graciously enough; let his own nationmen  
 30 fellow-countrymen bring what accusations they would, the king would  
 31 not be behind his predecessors in making much of Jonathan, for all his  
 32 courtesy to see. He was confirmed in the high priesthood, and what  
 33 other high dignities he held elsewhere, and declared besides the chief  
 34 of the king's friends.

35 And now Jonathan had a favour to ask; exemption from tribute for  
 36 Judaea, and the three cantons, and Samaria with its neighbouring town-  
 37 ships? he promised in return a payment of three hundred talents. To  
 38 this the king agreed, writing thus to Jonathan upon the matter ruled:  
 39 King Demetrius, to his brother prince Jonathan, and to the people of the  
 40 Jews, greeting. We send you herewith, for your better information, a  
 41 copy of the instructions we have given to our cousin Lathmus in your  
 42 regard. King Demetrius, to Lathmus, his good father, greeting. Where-  
 43 as the people of the Jews have ever been trusty friends to us, our pleasure  
 44 is it to reward them for the loyalty they have shown us. We therefore  
 45 confirm them in the possession of all Judaea, the three cities of Ephraim,  
 46 Lydda and Samaria, that formerly belonged to Samaria, and all their  
 47 neighbouring townships . . . to all those who do service at Jerusalem;  
 48 instead of the yearly revenues hitherto set apart for the king from harvest

1 "The three cantons, and Samaria with its neighbouring townships"; some think  
 this is a copyist's error for "the three cantons which had belonged to Samaria, with  
 their neighbouring townships," cf. verse 34.

and fruit-gathering.<sup>1</sup> Tribes and villages that was ours we also remit to them; nor lay any claim to the salt-pits, or the crownns which from time to time were bestowed upon us. Of all this we give them a full discharge, as that shall be valid in perpetuity. See to it that a copy of this decree shall be made, and handed over to Jonathan, who shall set it up in a public place on the holy mountain.

Here, then, was the whole matter at peace under Demetrios' rule, nor was any civil bad by; what meant he do but disbanded all his soldiers and send them home, except the foreign troops he had levied from the islands out at sea? Literally they hated him for it, the men, who had served under his father, and there was one Tryphon that took good note of these disorders in the army. This Tryphon was formerly of Alexander's faction, and now he had gone over to Antiochus, the Arabian, that had care of Alexander's son Antiochus. Much persuasion he used with him, to let Antiochus return to his father's throne; much told him of Demetrios, and how the soldiers were disaffected against him.

Time passed, and Tryphon was in Arabia still. Meanwhile, Jonathan was urgent with king Demetrios to withdraw the garrisons from Jerusalem and the other strongholds, where they bore arms yet, and against Israel. Nay, answered Demetrios, that I will do and more; great a business I have in store, for thee and for thy people both, when the time is ripe for it. For this present, it were well done to send troops for my own protecting; here is all my army hatched from me! Three thousand picked men Jonathan dispatched to Antioch, to the king's side, and right glad he was at their coming. What though the citizens, a hundred and a twenty thousand strong, were banded together against his royal person, driving him to take refuge within the court, and occupying the city streets as in warlike fashion? He had but to call the Jews to his aid, and they came at his summons; posted themselves here and there about the streets, and in one day slew a hundred thousand men, setting fire to the crown-brooks. Spoil there was for the winning, that day when they saved the king's life. The newholds, when they saw how easily the Jews got the mastery of them, had no more stomach for fighting; they were led in their surrender: A word! A trace! Have enough powder Jews have made us of us and of the day! And so, flinging away their weapons, they came to terms. Prince and people both had good proof, by now, of the Jews' valour; back they went to Jerusalem high in repute among the Syrians, and laden with spoils.

Demetrios, now firmly established on the throne, his dominions all at

<sup>1</sup> The sentence is obscure, and perhaps the text has been inaccurately transmitted. For "Tribes" the Greek has the form "Aphameneia," which the Latin interprets as a common noun, "vegetation."

11 peace, asked little enough of his promises; from Jonathan he was as-  
 12 signed altogether, left his services unaccompanied, and much mischief  
 13 did him thereby. It was now that Tryphoas came back, and with him  
 14 the young prince Antiochus, that took the style of king and had himself  
 15 crowned; all the disbanded armies of Demetrius rallied to them, and  
 16 turned upon their former masters, who fled routed before them. Tryphoas,  
 17 meanwhile, got possession of the diadem, and Antioch fell into his  
 18 hands. Thereupon came a letter from the young Antiochus to Jonathan,  
 19 confirming him in the high priesthood, and in possession both of Judaea  
 20 and of the slave nations; he was proclaimed as the king's friend, and a  
 21 present of golden cups sent for his use, with the right to drink out of gold  
 22 ware, to dress in purple, and to carry the golden buckle. His brother  
 23 Simon, too, was made lord of the sea-coast, from Tyre to the frontier of  
 24 Egypt.

25 And now Jonathan was on the march, across the river, patrolling the  
 cities everywhere, with all the armies of Syria gathered to aid him. . . .  
 He came to Ascalon, where the townsfolk welcomed him with all honour;  
 26 came to Gaza, where they shut the gates on him, and he must needs  
 undertake the siege of it. But when he had spread fire and rapine through  
 27 the countryside, the men of Gaza asked for terms, which he gave them,  
 28 carrying off their sons as hostages to Jerusalem. Then he went on patrol-  
 29 ling the country, all the way to Damascus. Now reached him that the  
 chiefs of Demetrius' faction were making head at Cadus, in Galilee, with  
 30 a whole army to support them, and their design was to remove him from  
 31 office. So he went to meet them, leaving his brother Simon in charge of  
 32 Judaea.

33 As for Simon, he made an assault upon Bethsai, and kept it for a long  
 34 while besieged, till at last it obtained terms of surrender; he rid the place  
 of its defenders and took over the command of it, putting in a garrison  
 of his own. Meanwhile, Jonathan was encamped by the waters of Gerasa;  
 35 here, on the plains of Asor, they were on the watch before day-break,  
 36 when they saw the enemy's force coming to meet them over the level  
 plain. There had an ambush ready for him on the hill-side, and as he  
 37 advanced to meet the main body, the men in ambush sprang up, and  
 38 engaged him. At this, all Jonathan's supporters took to their heels, some  
 rood their ground, but Mithrobates son of Abathum and Judas son of

<sup>1</sup> It is hardly possible to give any satisfactory account of the war as it stands. "The river," by all analogy, must be the Euphrates; why should Jonathan march to the plain? And here, in doing so, did he enter at Ascalon, some forty miles west of Jerusalem? Conceivably there has been some transposition in the text, which may have read originally, "And he [Antiochus] began pursuing the king across the river, with all the armies of Syria gathered to aid him; and Jonathan marched out and came to Ascalon . . ."

Captai, then had the marshalling of his men. What marvel if Jonathan n  
treat his garments about him, and covered earth on his head, and broke  
himself in prayer? Afterwards, he offered burnt offerings, and renewed his n  
sacrament, as the fight went on, his own men that had deserted their make n  
rallied to him, and joined in the pursuit all the way to Cades, where they  
escaped once more. In that day's fighting, three thousand of the Gen- n  
tiles fell, and so Jonathan made his way back to Jerusalem.

## CHAPTER 12

HERE was a posture of affairs suited Jonathan well enough yet would  
he send delegates to confirm and renew his alliance with the Ro-  
mans, Lacedæmon, ion, and other neighbours should have letters of the  
same tenour. To Rome, then, his messengers went, gained audience of  
the senate, and told how the high priest Jonathan and the Jewish people  
had sent them to renew their old treaty of friendship; and the Romans  
gave them such letters of recommendation to this country or that, as  
should bring them least to Judea under safe conduct.

The message Jonathan sent to the men of Sparta was in these terms:  
following. The high priest Jonathan, with the elders and priests and all  
the people of the Jews, to their brethren the Spartans, greeting. Long  
since, your king Arkes wrote to our own high priest Onias claiming his-  
ship between us, as witness the copy here subjoined; so honourable a  
welcome Onias gave to this messenger of yours, and accepted the proposal  
of friendly alliance. For ourselves, we have little need of such friendship;  
we seek we content, it is in the sacred books committed to our charge. Yet as  
we thought it best to treat with you for the renewal of this brotherly con-  
tract, before any estrangement should arise between us, your embassy to  
us is of long ago. Nineve four-day passes, one day up for remembrance, to  
how you are remembered, as brethren should be, in sacrifice and prayer  
we offer; concerns of yours is pride of ours still. In wars and calamities is  
much involved of life, powerful kings for our neighbours and our  
enemies, we would not embroil you, nor other allies of ours, in these  
quarrels. Now, by the grace of heaven, we are delivered; our enemies lie in  
crabbed; delegates of ours, Nicanor son of Anidochan and Antigast, re-  
are on their way to Rome, friendship and alliance of former days to con-  
firm afresh; and should we send them with no commend to you, no greeting, is  
no word from us of brotherhood revived? For you, send us this answer in  
in your turn.

And, the Arkes' letter to Onias, thus the copy of it ran, Arkes, king of is  
the Spartans, to the high priest Onias, greeting. Spartan and Jew, written is  
record above is, come of one blood, Abraham's. Appraised of this, we is

12 would fain know how you do; pray tell us. And take this message in return, Carle and whatsoever else is ours, in years, and years ours; of that, the bearer of this letter brings you assurance.

13 Then came news to Jonathan that the chiefs of Demetrius' faction were returning to the attack, and in greater force than ever, so out he marched, and met them in the Amathitis country; reprie he would not give them, nor invade his own. Spies of his went out into the enemy's camp, and reported, all was ready for a night attack: so, when the sun was down, Jonathan would have his men keep watch, ready armed all night for a battle, and posted sentries round his lines. The coming, heading of such preparations on their part, took alarm and let cowardly counsels prevail; they were at pains to leave watchfires burning in their camp, so that Jonathan and his men, dazzled by the glow of light, knew nothing of their plans till morning; and when he gave chase, it was too late to attack them; already they had crossed the river Eleutherus. Thereupon he turned his attack against the Zababarsas, an Arabian tribe, defeating them and taking spoils from them; and so, harnessing his weapons, he pressed on to Damascus, guarding all the country round about. Meanwhile, Simon had marched out to Ascalon and the neighbouring strongholds; thence he turned aside to Joppa, and took possession of it; thence had reached him, the townsfolk would yield the district to Demetrius' party, and he must have a portion thereof of his own.

14 When Jonathan returned, he summoned the elders of the people, and took counsel with them, how best to raise strongholds in Judaea, and build up walls in Jerusalem itself. Hither there must have, above all, between the Citadel and the rest of the town, he would have it set off from the rest, wending by itself, with an opportunity to buy and sell. A great market there was for the day's reticling; and when the wall had tumbled down, over the market on the east, he made it good; it is the part we call Capetretia. Meanwhile, Simon rebuked Adiafa in the Sephela and fortified it; both and he it should have himselfward.

15 And what of Tryphoe? Lordship of all Asia he coveted, and a royal crown; it should be Antiochus' own crown. The danger was, Jonathan would offend his enemy, and desert to arms; Jonathan lives he must save and put to death. So he moved his quarters to Bethan, where Jonathan came out to meet him with forty thousand men, picked warriors all of them, at his beck. Hurr was a great retainer, and Tryphoe, dazzled by this show of force, was fain to give him an honourable welcome. He would admit Jonathan among his closest friends, and honour gifts on him; let Jonathan give orders, and Tryphoe's soldiers would obey. Then he

<sup>1</sup> 'Let cowardly counsels prevail'; literally, 'was dazzled in their watch,' but the context shows that in fact they bore a secret.

mind, What needs it, such a host of men should go campaigning, when there's of war is none? It were better to disband them, and choose out a few for thy own retinue. That done, bear me company to Ptolemais city and strengthen it; troops and officers I will hand over here thy charge; it was on that ground I came.

What did Jonathan? He fell into the trap, sent his men back to Juda, as and kept but three thousand under arms; of these, he left one thousand at Jaffa, and took but a thousand in his company. No sooner had he entered Ptolemais than the sword felt that the game behind him, secured his person, and put his motions to the sword. Hornet and son Tryphon went out to Gadda, to find the rest of his followers in the Great Plain, and make an end of them; but these, hearing that Jonathan and his men as had been sought and murdered, resolved to put a bold front on it, and marched in battle array. Finding them ready to sell their lives dearly, as their pursuers abandoned the chase, and all reached Juda safe and sound. as For Jonathan and his companions they made great dole, and loudly all Israel echoed their laments. Neighbouring people was come but went to about to overthrow them, and so wonder; their chiefs, their champions as gone, now was the time to fall upon them, and rid earth of their memory.

## CHAPTER 13

AND what did Simon, when he heard that Tryphon had levied a strong force, for Juda's invasion and overthrow? There was all the people as in a great taking of fear; as he made his way to Jerusalem and there gathered them to meet him. And thus, to put heart into them, he spoke as First it came to tell you what battles we have fought, what dangers endured, I and my brethren and all my father's kin, low and necessary to defend. In that cause, and for the love of Israel, my brethren have as died, one and all, till I only am left; never be it said of me, in the hour as of need I laid life dear, more precious than thine! May, come the whole as world against us, to gild its malice with our ruin, race and uncertainty, wives and children of ours shall find me their champion yet. At these as words, the spirit of the whole people revived; loud came their answer, as Father of Judas and Jonathan, thou to lead us now! Thine to sustain as our cause; and never word of thine shall go unheeded!

Thereupon, he summoned all the fighting men together, and pressed as on to have the walls of Jerusalem finished, till it was fortified all about; and he sent Jonathan, son of Abstem, to Joppe, at the head of a force as newly raised; the garrison was disbanded, and a new deposit held it now. Meanwhile, Tryphon had left Ptolemais, with a great army at his heels, as

11 marching on Jeda, and with him went Jonathan, his prisoner. He found  
12 Simon camped at Adisa, that looks out over the plain; here was  
Jonathan's brother Simon taking his place, and offering battle. Sorrow  
13 were sent out to make his excuses: 'Hold us the person of thy brother  
Jonathan, it is because he is in default to the royal treasury over his dom-  
14 ing with us. Thou hast but to send a hundred talents of silver, and his  
two sons, to be surety he will not play us false when we release him, and  
15 he is a free man.' Well Simon knew it was treacherously spoken; yet he  
gave assent, both money and hostages should be surrendered. A heart  
16 grudge Issa's people would bear him, if they had cause to say, 'For  
a want of money paid over and money given, Jonathan must die! Sure they  
were, the boys and the money both, but all was mockery; Jonathan never  
came back.'

17 And now Tyrpho invaded Jude, bent on its undoings; his troops must  
find a compass by the road that leads round to Ador, and, march day  
18 or where they would, Simon and his army were at their heels. Wood came  
to him from the defenders of Jerusalem closed, he should make his way  
19 across the desert without more ado, and bring them supplies; and that  
same night he had all his cavalry in readiness for the march, but there was  
a gnat full of snow, and come he might not . . . into the country of  
20 Galilee.<sup>1</sup> When he reached Batseana, then and there he put Jonathan  
and his sons to death; and with that, he turned about, and went back to  
his own country.

21 These lay the bones of Simon's brother Jonathan, all he sent to Jeda  
to them, and gave them burial at Modin, the city of his fathers. Loud lament  
22 all Israel made for him, and long they lamented him. Over the graves of  
his father and his brethren Simon raised a towering monument, of hewn  
23 stone belted and bekked; then, with father and mother and his four  
24 brothers in mind, he built seven pyramids, in rows; and all about were  
gray columns, covered with stones and slabs; an shining memorial, and  
25 a landmark to mariners at sea. Such was the tomb he raised at Modin,  
and it may be seen to this day. Meanwhile, as they were journeying to-  
26 gether, Tyrpho murdered the young king Antiochus by artifice, and  
succeeded to his throne, wearing the crown of all Asia; great mischief it  
was he did to his country.

27 All the fortress of Judaea Simon repaired, building them up with  
high tower and stout wall, with batt and bay and sower a garison but had  
28 provisions laid up in store. Then he chose out envoys and sent them to  
king Demetrius, praying that the land might enjoy liberty after the

<sup>1</sup> It seems clear from the context that some words have dropped out. The Greek text has, 'and come he might not, because of the snow. So he moved camp and went into the country of Galilee.' But the passage may originally have indicated what manner Tyrpho had for shortening his campaign in Judea.



tyrannous actions of Tryphas.<sup>1</sup> When king Demetrius answered the request, he wrote in these terms following. King Demetrius to the high priest Simon, the friend of kings, and to all the elders and people of the Jews, greeting. Crowns of gold and robes of scarlet you sent us were faithfully delivered. Great favour we mean to show you, by sending word to the king's officers to respect the commissions granted you. The decrees we made concerning you are yet in force; and, for the strongholds you have built, they shall be yours. Each of yours in the past, writing or unwriting, or in confirmed, concession has you owed, and all other tribute that was due from Jerusalem, is due no longer. Fit be they for such enrolment, Jews as shall be enrolled in our armies, and ever between us and you let there be peace!

Thus, in the hundred and twentieth year, Israel was free of the Gentile yoke at last; and this style the people began to use, were it perhaps a badge or public instrument they needed, in the first year of Simon's high priesthood, chief paramount and governor of the Jews.

Thus it was that Simon marched on Gaza,<sup>2</sup> and besieged it with all his army, built engines, and fired an entry into one of the towers. Out into the streets they rushed, that manured the engines, and there was a fine commotion in the city. Here were the townsfolk, with their wives and children, mounting the walls with their garments rent about them, and crying aloud, Simon should give them quarter; great were their sins, a greater still his clemency! At that, Simon rejoined; hussy them to the death he would not, but he drove them out of the city, and cleansed all the houses where idols had stood then, with ringing of psalms and giving of thanks, he made his entry; and saw all defilement must be put away, as and such children it must have as did what the law commanded. After that, he fortified it, and made his own dwelling there.

And what of the Gentiles that were left in Jerusalem quailed? Better a Jewish mastery or less as they might not, buy or sell they might not, so that they were hard put to it for food, and many died of famine. At last as they cried out to Simon, he should give them quarter, and give them quarter he did, but drove them out, and cleansed the Citadel off its pollution. On the twenty-third day of the second month, in the hundred and a seventy-first year, in came the Jewish folk singing psalms and bearing palm-branches, with music of harp, and cymbals, and others of such ill

<sup>1</sup> After the tyrannous actions of Tryphas? Surely (in the Greek text), 'because all the actions of Tryphas were against us.' The meaning is perhaps that Simon now recognised all the actions of Tryphas as usurpations of power; it is evident from what follows that he was not sure of his position had the Jews, by their support of a proconsul, retained the privileges granted in 1133-50?

<sup>2</sup> Josephus is perhaps right in reading 'Gaza' (see three miles from Jerusalem) instead of 'Gaza' (cf. 14.3).

so neighboring Israel was now rid. Every year, Simon proclaimed, holiday  
as should be kept at this shrine; and he fortified that part of the temple mount-  
ain which was close by the citadel; here he dwelt, and his followers with  
as him. And now here was his son John grown into a brave warrior; him  
Simon put at the head of the whole army, with his quarters at Gethse.

## CHAPTER 14

THE year following, what news Demetrius do but master his army and  
I besiege himself to Media, where he would make levies for the war  
against Trypho? When Antioch, king of the Medes and Persians, had  
news of it, he gave orders to one of his chieftains, the intruder must be  
I taken alive and brought into his presence. The order was obeyed; the  
Syrian king, routed and captured, was brought before Antioch, who put  
him safely in prison.

I Then, during Simon's days, the whole land of Jude was at peace. Ever  
his people's good sought he, and ever by willing hearts was obeyed and  
I honoured. With great state he took possession of Joppa as a harbour,<sup>1</sup>  
and so found access to the islands out at sea. How wide spread he the  
I frontiers of Israel, how firmly held his possessions, captured how many  
of his foes! Geras and Bethsura he won, ay, and the Citadel itself, ridding  
I it of all defilement; there was no resisting his power. In his day, every  
man farmed his own lands in security, well of Jude plucked its apples, and  
I the trees their fruits: an old man in the market-place, busy over the  
common meal, and young men were the glory of their glorious cam-  
I paing. Never a city but he furnished it with stores of provisions; a bul-  
work each of them should be of sturdy defence. What wonder if the story  
I of his conquest was noted to the world's end? Such peaceful times  
as brought he to his country, when all Israel kept high holiday, every man  
with his own vine and fig-tree for shade, and enemy was none to doubt  
I there: domestic malice unseen, foreign tyranny shivered all around!  
as Among his own folk, what comfort he gave the friendless, how some-  
I times the law, what stout work made of truth and conscience; how  
adorned the sanctuary, how increased the number of its treasures!

I To Rome, to Sparta itself, came tidings of Jonathan's death, and was  
as heard right sorrowfully. When they learned that his brother Simon had  
been made high priest instead, many arow of the hand and all its clime,

<sup>1</sup> This is perhaps the best interpretation of a difficult phrase, "With all his glory he resolved Joppa to be a harbour." For the language itself, cf. 10.28, 11.10. Joppa had been captured by Jonathan (10.76), and remained at least nominally in Jewish possession (12.15; 13.17). Simon's achievement, according to verse 34 below, was to fortify it.

they wrote to him on tablets made of bronze, to renew the treaty of<sup>1</sup> friendship they had with his brethren, Judas and Jonathan, before him;<sup>2</sup> and their letters were read out before the whole assembly at Jerusalem. 18 The Spartans wrote in these words following: The rulers and com-  
monalty of Sparta, to the high priest Simon, the elders and priests and all the people of the Jews, greeting. Welcome news your ambassadors have 21 brought us, of fame and order and prosperity you enjoy. And their 22 errand stands recorded in our public annals; how Nannetes son of Antiochus and Antipater son of Jason came to renew our old treaty of friendship with you; how the people resolved to give them full greeting, 24 and to lay up a copy of their report in the public archives, that should preserve the memory of it among the Spartan people; and how an account of all this was sent to the high priest Simon.

Nannetes was sent on a further mission to Rome, bearing a great 27-28 get of gold, a thousand minas in weight, to renew the alliance there. And when all this reached the ears of the people . . .<sup>3</sup>

. . . Men began to ask, how they could show their gratitude to Simon, 30 and to his sons? Here was one that had reversed the fortunes of his race, 31 and rid Israel of its foes. So they gave him exemption from public bur-  
dens, and inscribed their decree on tablets of bronze, fastened to pillars which were set up on mount Sion.

And thus the inscription ran: On this eighteenth day of Elul, in the 17 hundred and seventy-second year of the Greek empire, the third of Simon's high priesthood, there was a high assembly held of priests and 19 people, (the chief) and elders of the whole nation, that had before them these considerations following. All through the long wars of our country, Simon and his brethren, sons of Mattathias, of Jadd's clan, put their lives 22 in peril, and fought for law and sanctuary against the common enemy, much glory winning for their own nation. When Jonathan, that had ruled the 23 people and been their high priest, became a part of his race, enemies 24 thought to invade the country and crush the power of it, violate its holy places; and Simon it was withstood them. Champion of his people's 25 cause, much he spent to arm his warriors, and furnish them with pay. Judas's sides he fortified, and others besides; Bethoron on the frontier, 27

<sup>1</sup> The implication appears to be that both Rome and Sparta were partners in the manner described.

<sup>2</sup> Verse 24. It would be natural to assume that the end of this verse refers to the Roman people; and the Clementine Vulgate, without any manuscript authority, actually inserts the word 'Romans' for the proceedings of verse 23, 24, are evidently those of the Jewish people. There is a want of sequence in the narrative as it stands, and it seems possible that verses 23-24 of chapter 13 originally stood here, and were accidentally displaced; if so, 'all this' will refer to the Roman dispatches.

- 14 once a stronghold of the nation, garrisoned now by Jews, Joppa on the sea coast, and Gazara in the Asotis region; Gazara, too, once hostile, with Jewish troops garrisoned in, and in each town made provision for repairs to its fleet.
- 15 The people, seeing him so loyal a lover of his country's resources, made him their ruler and high priest; no less was due to such exploits, public service so faithfully done, such constant ambition for his people's honour.
- 16 In his days it was, and by his means, the land was rid at last of Gentile intruders; not least the garrison of David's own Keep at Jerusalem, that by their selling out profaned the sacred precincts, and much defiled their purity; a Jewish garrison he set there, to guard both city and country-side, and build Jerusalem walls yet higher. High priesthood of his, king Demetrius must needs acknowledge, bestowing on him the title of king's friend, and loading him with honours. What could he do else?
- 17 He was Rome itself greeting the Jewish folk as allies, good friends, and kinsmen, welcoming the envoys of Simon with civic state. How went the Jews, priests and people both, agreed that he should rule them, granting him the high priesthood<sup>1</sup> by right inalienable, until true peoples they should have once more. Their ruler he should be, and guardian of their temple; appoint officer and magistrate, master of ordnance and captain of garrison,<sup>2</sup> and have charge of the sanctuary besides. Him all must obey, in his name deeds be done up, all the country through; of people and gold should be his portion. Of the rest, both priests and people, none should contravene these privileges, not gaining Simon's will, nor convocate assembly in the country without his consent of people, buckle of gold, none should wear; nor any man defy or void this edict, but at his peril.
- 18 The people's pleasure it was to anoint Simon after this sort; and Simon, he would not say them nay; high priest, and of priests and people leader, governor and champion, he would be honoured. So they had the decree inscribed on tablets of bronze, and set up plaques to view in the temple precincts, and a copy of it they put by in the treasury, in the safe-keeping of Simon and his heirs.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Maccabean high priesthood seems to have been regarded as an emergency dispensation. For the mention of the priests, cf. 4-48.

<sup>2</sup> Verses 47-49. We should perhaps take these verses as part of the decree itself elsewhere where all seems a needless repetition of verse 26.

## CHAPTER 15

NOW turn we to Demetrius' other son, Antiochus.<sup>1</sup> He it was deposed  
 a letter, from the islands over sea, to Simon, high priest and ruler  
 of the Jews, and to the whole nation, and this was the content of it. King  
 Antiochus, to the high priest Simon and to the people of the Jews, greet-  
 ing. There is the kingdom of my fathers avowed by all folk; I mean to  
 challenge them, and bring back the old ways. To this end, I have made a  
 great levy of mercenaries, and built ships of war; passage I needs must  
 have through your territory, ere I can take vengeance for lands of mine  
 ravaged, cities of mine laid waste. This gate, then, I make thee exempt-  
 tion, such as thou hast, in the name of former kings, from public offer-  
 ings and all other payment due to me; the right of minting money within  
 thy own borders; for Jerusalem, enjoyment of her sacred liberties of  
 worship thou hast made, stronghold thou hast built, the undisturbed  
 possession. Never a claim the king has, or shall have hereafter, on his  
 subjects, but so thou it is confirmed; and, when the kingdom is ours, such  
 honours we will bestow as shall make thee, and thy men, and its sanc-  
 tuary, renowned all the world over.

So, in the hundred and seventy-fourth year, Antiochus returned to his  
 native country, and the armies rallied to him, until Tryphon had but a  
 small following left: all down the sea coast he fled, with Antiochus at his  
 heels, till he reached Doris; and even he saw the walls closing round him, as  
 near his troops had played him false. With a hundred thousand foot, and a  
 eight thousand horse, Antiochus came to the gates of Dora, and began the  
 siege of it; his ships, too, blockaded the coast, so that it was cut off by  
 land and sea alike; water it none might, nor leave it . . .

And now here were Nisibides and his fellow envoys come back from  
 Rome,<sup>2</sup> with a copy of despatches sent out to kings and nations every-  
 where, and this was the tenor of them. Lacks, the Roman consul, to  
 king Ptolemy, greeting. Envoys we have but now received in audience  
 from a friendly country, to wit, Judaea; the people of the Jews, with their  
 high priest Simon, had sent to renew their old treaty of alliance with us,  
 and had made us a present besides, a golden target of a thousand minas in  
 weight. Agreed we then to warn kings and nations everywhere, they  
 should not hurt or assault the Jewish people, its cities and countryside,  
 nor molest its enemies; and for the target of gold, our pleasure was to  
 accept the gift of it. If then there be misdoers from Judaea sheltering in

<sup>1</sup> Antiochus was son to the Demetrius whose death is recorded in 10.50, brother  
 to the Demetrius first mentioned in 10.52.

<sup>2</sup> Verses 27-29. See note on 12.24.

among you, our bidding is you should hand them over to the high priest  
 22 Simon, for each punishment as the Jewish law prescribes. Copies of this  
 decree have been sent to Demetrios, Antioch, Antiochia and Arsacia,  
 23 and to these countries following: Lampacae, Sparda, Daba, Myndus,  
 Sappa, Caria, Samos, Pamphylia, Lycia, Halicarnassus, Ceca, Side,  
 24 Antioch, Rhodes, Phaselia, Gargasa, Caidas, Cyprus and Cyren. A  
 further copy has been sent to the high priest Simon and to the Jewish  
 people . . .

25 Once again! King Antiochus laid siege to Dura, besieging fresh force to  
 beat, and devising fresh engines; and over he kept Trypho'n beset in,  
 26 so that escape was none. Thereupon Simon despatched ten thousand  
 picked men to aid in the siege, with silver and gold and a deal of tackle  
 27 besides; but except that the king would not, all his promises were forgot,  
 28 and Simon a stranger sorrow. Athenobios it was, one of the king's friends,  
 that came to treat with him, and this was the message he bore: Cities of  
 29 mine you hold, Joppe, and Gazara, and Jerusalem besieged; lands about  
 them you have laid waste, and done Spila much mischief besides, so-  
 30 exceeding everywhere on my domain. Needs must you should hand over  
 31 cities you have occupied, revenues of Gentile lands you have despoiled, or  
 due five hundred talents of silver in exchange, and five hundred more to  
 compensate for damage done and revenue lost; if not, we will come and  
 overpower you by force of arms.

32 So came Athenobios, the king's friend, to Jerusalem, where he saw  
 what were Simon kept, much display of gold and silver, and a great  
 throng of attendance, till he was dunned at the night. Yet delivered he his  
 33 errand; to which Simon made this answer: Other men's stuff seized we  
 never, nor other men's rights detain; here be lands that were our father's  
 34 once, by contract of ours for men who wrongfully held; opportunity  
 35 given us, should we not claim the patrimony we had lost? As for day talk  
 of Joppe and Gazara, these were cities did much mischief to people and  
 land of ours; for the worth of them, thou shalt have a hundred talents if  
 36 thou wilt. Never a word said Athenobios, but went back to the king very  
 ill pleased, and told him what answer was given, of Simon's court, too,  
 and of all else he had seen.

37 Antiochus was in a great taking of anger; here was Trypho'n nearly  
 as escaped by ship to Orthosia! He must needs leave the sea coast in charge  
 38 of Cendebares, with a strong command both of horse and foot, while  
 himself gave Trypho'n chase. This Cendebares had orders in advance

<sup>1</sup> Some Greek manuscripts have 'on the second day,' instead of 'once again,' but this is probably a correction, designed to clear up a difficulty. Nothing has been said which implies that the siege described in verse 24 had come to an end and it is not easy to account for the mention of a second siege, unless we suppose a gap in the manuscript which has been accidentally filled up by verse 25-26.

and threaten Judaea; Gedor<sup>1</sup> he should fortify, and there make himself fast, the better to levy war on Judea. So he marched away to Jamnia, and as he about harrying the Jews; now it was an inland, with prisoners carried away, now a massacre; and all the while he was fortifying Gedor. Cavalry he quartered there, and other troops besides, to ally out and to patrol the roads into Judaea; the king would have it so.

## CHAPTER 16

**I**T was not long before John came up from Gassara, to tell his father Simon how El Candaubarus was using their fellow-countrymen. And as that, Simon must have his two elder sons present, Judas and John both, and make the command over to them. Still young we were, he said, I and my brethren and my father's kin, when we began that war on Iannai's enemies which is being fought yet; under our banners once and again came victory, and the day was used for Israel. I am an old man now, and it is past to do what I and brethren of mine did; march out, fight in our people's cause, and heaven's aid be with you!

Twenty thousand warriors John chose out from the rest, and cavalry to support them, and away they went to fight Candaubarus. That night they spent at Migdim, and on the morrow, when day left it for the valley, what a huge army was this, both of horse and foot, encountering them! And a monstrous storm threw in between. When John brought his army to the opposite bank, and found his men had little stomach for the crossing, he made the passage first, leaving the rest to follow at his heels; then drew them up by companies, with the cavalry in between, so greatly did the enemy's cavalry outnumber them. And now the sacred trumpet sounded the charge; fled Candaubarus, fled his army at their onslaught, and many were left dead on the field; for the rest, they were fain to take refuge behind their walls again. John went in pursuit, for all his brother Judas had been wounded in the battle, and chased them as far as the walls of Gedor . . . which he had fortified.<sup>2</sup> Nor might they find shelter in the strongholds of the Asotus territory, he burnt these to the ground; a toll of two thousand men he had taken before he returned victorious to Jerusalem.

<sup>1</sup> 'Gedor' is 'Gedron' in the Greek text, here and in verse 22 below, to correspond with verse 2 of the following chapter.

<sup>2</sup> The name John is not mentioned in the original, either here or in verses 4 and 7 below. But it is plain that either John or Judas is meant, and 12.12 seems to give the best grounds for a decision.

<sup>3</sup> Verse 2. It is grammatically impossible to make Candaubarus the subject of the verb 'he had fortified,' as the sentence stands. It seems likely that there is some slight error of position in the manuscript.

- 11 Then we come to Priestry, son of Abobus, that was in charge of all  
12 Jewish plains, and had a purse well lined with silver and gold; was he not  
13 the son-in-law of a high priest?<sup>1</sup> But higher still his ambition ran; he  
would make himself master of the whole country, wherever he pleased for  
14 Simon and his sons together. It was in Sobach, the eleventh month,  
of the hundred and seventy-seventh year, that Simon came down to Jericho,  
as ever he visited all the cities of Judaea in his great care for them; and  
15 his sons Mattathias and Judas went with him. And there, in a castle he  
had built for himself, Dath is the name of it, the son of Abobus gave  
them treacherous welcome. A great feast he made, but he had men wait-  
ing in readiness, and with these, when Simon and his sons had drunk  
16 deeper and were, with rest of their redness. Never saw Israel so  
treacherous a deed, or good service so ill rewarded.  
17 News of all this was sent by Priestry to the king, and in writing he  
plea was, an army should be sent out in support of him, and the country,  
with all its cities and all the tribes that came from them, given into his  
18 charge. Others of his men he despatched to Gassan; John must be put to  
death, his women, and for the captives, they should have silver and gold  
19 and good recompense, would they but rally to his side; where again were  
20 to take possession of Jerusalem, and of the temple hill. But too late; a  
messenger had reached John at Gassan, telling him his father and  
21 brethren were dead, and himself too marked down for slaughter; where-  
upon he took arms in good earnest; their wandering errand known, he  
seized his murderers and made an end of them.  
22 What else John did, and how fought he, have deeds done, and strong  
23 walls built, and all his history, you may read in the annals of his time,  
that were kept faithfully since the day when he succeeded his father as  
high priest.

<sup>1</sup> "Of a high priest"; Josephus understands this as referring to Simon himself. But it does not seem likely that the author should have suppressed his name to write on, only to mention it in verse 17 again when he mentions the circumstances of effort in adding to the bitterness of the crime (cf. verse 17). Possibly some other name has dropped out, e.g., that of Abitama.



## THE SECOND BOOK OF MACHABEES

### CHAPTER I

TO their brethren, the Jews of Egypt, chose of Jerusalem and Judaea  
I send brotherly greeting and good health.<sup>1</sup> God speed you well, the  
covenant he made with his true worshippers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,  
never forgetting: reverent hearts may he give you, brave and generous to  
perform his will, with love and peace of his enlarge your thoughts, and  
send you happiness; may he listen to your prayer, and be gracious, and in  
the hour of peril never forsake you! Take courage, then; we in this land  
are praying for you. Time was, in the hundred and sixty-sixth year, when  
Demetrius was reigning, we ourselves were writing to you in the midst  
of suffering and alarms. Much had we to undergo, when Jason would  
betray his own country, his own people: here was the gateway burnt to  
the ground, here were innocent lives fulfilled. Cried we upon the Lord,  
and all our prayers were answered; burnt-sacrifice and bloodless offering  
were made, lamps lighted, and leaves set forth in the temple as of old.  
Look to it, then, you make browns and keep holiday in this month of  
Catan.<sup>2</sup> Write in the hundred and eighty-eighth year.

The citizens folk of Jerusalem and Judaea,<sup>3</sup> their council of elders, and  
I, Judas, to Aristobolus, of the anointed princely race, that was master of  
king Ptolemy, and to the Jews of Egypt, greeting and health. Great thanks  
we owe to God, that from the extreme of peril has delivered us, yet, though  
we had such a king for our adversary, as could bring in hordes of men  
from Persia, both us and our holy city to subdue.<sup>4</sup>

What because of him, think you, the general that marched away into  
Persia with a countless army in his host?<sup>5</sup> He met his end in the temple of

<sup>1</sup> Verses 1-9. The first, it would seem, of a series of fragments prefixed to the book proper. If the date given at the end belongs to it, it must have been written about the year 115 before Christ, after the death of Simon.

<sup>2</sup> Catan and its feast is the feast alluded to in the feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23, 34), but that of the Dedication (I Mac. 4, 59, [2. 12, 12-13] which appears that the same ceremonies were used.

<sup>3</sup> Verses 10-18. The date mentioned in verse 10 probably belongs to the earlier fragments, those the authors usually dated their letters at the end, cf. 11, 21, 32, 38 below. If so, this second fragment, indeed, will have been written by Judas Machabeus to Aristobolus, ruler of the Egyptian King Ptolemy Philometor, some forty years earlier than verses 1-9.

<sup>4</sup> Verses 17, 22. The Latin here seems designed to make room of a passage untranslatable, and probably corrupt, in the Greek text.

<sup>5</sup> Verses 23-28. If Aristobolus Epiphanes is meant, the description of him as 'the general' is highly suspicious. It seems possible that no name was mentioned in the original, and that the word 'Aristobolus' was twice introduced by a copyist.

12 Simon, through guile of the priests that served it. Thither Antiochus had  
 come with his friends, putting it about that he would wed the goddess,  
 and tying chains to a great part of her treasures under the title of dowry.  
 13 The priests, then, had the money laid out in readiness; into the precincts  
 he came, with a menage retinue, and they, now that Antiochus was within,  
 14 shut the temple gates. Thereupon, luring themselves in by their secret  
 door, they killed the guard and his company with throwing of stones,  
 cut them limb from limb, and threw down the severed heads of some to  
 15 the populace without. Blood, upon every account, be this God of ours,  
 16 that denies protection to the slayer! We, then, on this twenty-fifth day  
 of Casleus, mean to celebrate the purification of the temple, and hold our-  
 selves bound to notify you of it, so that you too may keep holiday, with  
 making of loaves. . . .

. . . And of the fire imparted to us, when Nehemias offered sacrifice at  
 17 the re-building of temple and altar.<sup>1</sup> Long ago, when our fathers were  
 being carried off into the Persian country, priests of the true God that  
 held offer in those days took away the fire from the altar, and hid it down  
 in the valley, in a pit both deep and dry, so well guarding their secret that  
 18 none might know where it was to be found. Years passed, and God's will  
 was that Nehemias should come back, holding the Persian king's warrant.  
 Nehemias it was that had search made for the fire, and by the goodness  
 of these very priests that hid it; but they made report, for they could find  
 19 none, only a puddle of water.<sup>2</sup> And what did Nehemias? He would have  
 some of the water drawn and flushed to him; with this water, over the  
 sacrifice was laid on the altar, both the wood and the offerings themselves  
 20 must be sprinkled. Sprinkled they were, and when the sun shone out,  
 that ill new was hidden by a cloud, all at once a great fire blazed up,  
 attending the beholders.

minutely anxious to identify the unnamed figure. If so, the fire we are con-  
 cerned with is that of some general in command of Antiochus's army; his own is  
 described, quite differently, in 2:2 below.

<sup>1</sup> The Latin makes a single sentence of the whole verse, but by dint of con-  
 structing what is evidently a gap in the Greek text. The end of the second fragment  
 seems to have been lost; and also the beginning of a third fragment, which  
 occupies the rest of the chapter. The identity of Nehemias seems doubtful; the  
 well-known governor of that name reinforced the walls of Jerusalem during a military  
 siege the rebuilding of the Temple. But a Nehemias is mentioned in I Esd. 2:2,  
 Neh. 5:3, among the satraps who conspired with Zerobabel. The description  
 "Nehemias the priest" in verse 12 is probably due to an error in our present Latin  
 text.

<sup>2</sup> The "fire" hidden in the pit was presumably a smouldering log, such as might  
 be hidden away at night to be used in the morning. The "black water" found on  
 the site was evidently something different, and there is no reason to think that its  
 properties, natural or supernatural, belonged to the "fire" originally deposited there.

To prayers fell the priests all around, while sacrifice was done, Jonathan is to lead them;<sup>1</sup> and the rest answering; no prayer fell Nehemias, and this is was the manner of his praying: Lord God, that all things madest, the terrible, the strong, the just, the merciful, king gracious as none else; none as else so kindly, none else so just, as thou, the almighty, the merciful Israel from all perils thou deliverest, thou didst make choice of our fathers, and set them apart for thyself. For the whole nation of Israel receive our sacrifices; all are thine, thy own domains keep Leviathan. Bring home the calves; or captives of the heathen conquerors set free; to the despised, the outcast grant redress; let the world know what a God is ours! Crush the oppressor, the tyrant that so mistreats us, and to thy own sanctuary, as Moses is sheweth, thy own people restore!

Then, till the sacrifice was consumed, the priests went on with their singing of hymns; and when all was finished, Nehemias would have them to drink pure stones with the water that was left. Thereupon, a flame is broke out from them, but died away when the altar fire blazed up again over powder.<sup>2</sup> The news travelled, till the Persian king himself was told a hot water appeared where culled priests had hidden the fire, how, with this water, Nehemias and his company had buried the sacrifice. Good is heed he gave to the matter, and after due examination found the ground to with a shrike, in witness of what he felt there. Largesse the priests had, to and many were the gifts passed from hand to hand, when the truth of the matter was proved.<sup>3</sup> As for the place, Nehemias himself called it *Nephtis* as that,<sup>4</sup> which means Purification; but the vulgar call it *Nepht*.

## CHAPTER 2

**Y**OU shall also find it set down in the depositions made by the prophet Jeronius, that he bade the exiles restore the sacred fire, in the manner aforesaid.<sup>5</sup> Strict charge he gave them, the Lord's commandments they

<sup>1</sup> Jonathan was not the high priest, but the leader of a course of priests (Ezra. ix. 44).

<sup>2</sup> Verses 31, 32. The Greek text here is very doubtful, and perhaps indicates, not that the water was poured out on stones, but that stones were used to black up the hidden pool.

<sup>3</sup> In the Greek text, no mention is made of the priests the Persian king exchanged gifts with his favorites, by way of celebrating the event (cf. Apoc. ii. 26).

<sup>4</sup> The word *Nephtis* can hardly be what the author wrote; there is no such root signifying purification.

<sup>5</sup> Verses 1-12. These verses seem to be a continuation of the fragments preserved in the foregoing chapter. Nothing in the prophecy of Jeronius, as we have it, relates the circumstances here mentioned, although verse 2 is possibly a reference to Isa. 4.

should keep ever in mind, nor let false gods, all gold and silver and fine  
 & array, steal away their hearts; with much else to confirm them in their  
 & regard for the law. And here, in this same document, the story was told,  
 how a divine oracle came to Jerusalem, and he must needs go out, with  
 & tabernacle and ark to bear him company, to the very mountain Moses  
 & climbed long ago, when he had sight of God's domain.<sup>1</sup> A cave Jerusalem  
 & found there, in which he set down tabernacle and ark and incense-altar,  
 & and stopped up the entrance behind him. There were some that followed;  
 & so that they lost in coming up to mark the spot, but find it they could  
 & not. He, when they told him of it, rebuked their eagerness; Nay, said he,  
 the place must remain ever unknown, till the day when God brings his  
 & people together once more, and is reconciled; then, divinely, the secret  
 shall be made manifest. Then once again the Lord's majesty shall be seen,  
 and the cloud that enshrouds it; the same vision that was granted to Moses,  
 and to Solomon when he prayed that the great God would have his temple  
 & so built; Solomon, the master of wisdom, that in his wisdom offered  
 & sacrifice to hallow the temple he had made.

10 Prayed Moses, prayed Solomon, and the same down from heaven to  
 & enshrine the burnt-sacrifice. . . .

11 . . . . Unseen, Moses said, the victim for flesh, and so the fire must con-  
 & sume it. . . .

12 . . . . No other ritual had King Solomon, that for eight days would con-  
 & sume his dedication fire!<sup>2</sup>

13 With all this, dispositions Nehemias made, records Nehemias kept, are  
 & in full agreement. He it was founded a library, and there collected histo-  
 & ries of king and prophet, and of David himself; dispatches, too, the kings  
 & had sent, and inventories of gifts made. And now Judas (in his) rage has  
 & recovered all such records as were lost to us through the late wars, and they  
 & are here in our keeping: would you be in possession of these, you have  
 & but to read and fetch them.

14 Meanwhile, we notify you by these petitions of that dancing ceremony  
 & we mean to perform; do us the courtesy to keep holiday on your part. See  
 & what deliverance God has sent to his people, restoring to us our country  
 & domain, our sovereignty, our priesthood, our holy way of living! Think  
 & you can be well still, are long, the promises made in his law; take pity on

<sup>1</sup> Some of the visions described by the Hebrew prophets may have taken place only in a vision, not in actual life, cf. e.g., Jer. 13.1-7. The mountain is no doubt Pisgah (Deut. 34).

<sup>2</sup> Verses 10-12. It is difficult to make any continuous sense out of these verses as they have come down to us, and it seems possible that a considerable portion of the text has been lost. The missing part might have explained what was the relevance of this long excursion into past history, which has no immediate bearing on Judas and the re-dedication of the temple.

us, that are scattered wide as hooves, and on this hallowed soil remember! What mean they else, these great perils overcome, that sanctuary purified is at last? . . .

Speak we of Judas Machabaeus and his brethren, and how the great temple was purified, and the altar hallowed anew;<sup>1</sup> of the battles they fought against Antiochus, called the Liberator, and Hystaspes, that was his son. Speak we of heavenly manifestations, sent to encourage the champions of Jewry, till at last, though so few, they won back their country, and put the hordes of heathendom to flight. Speak we of that temple, the most famous in all the world, by their means recovered, of a city set free, of forgotten laws re-established, and how the Lord, in his great compassion, showed them mercy. All this, the argument of five books *Janes* of a Cynus wrote, we have been at pains to abridge within the compass of a single volume.

What would you? These be books a many, and they are hard put to it in that world trace the course of history, for the abundance of the matter therein comprised. And my aim was, if a man would read, read he should be and with relish; would a man study, without great ado he should be able to commit all to memory; and so I would serve every man's turn. But for me, that undertook the business of abridgement, think you it was light labour? Nay, here was a task all watching and sweat, yet shoulder the burden I would; lest that prepare a banquet must work for other men's pleasure, and earn nothing but their thanks. Full information would you have about this or that, I remit you to my author; for myself, I will be true to my own pattern of abridgement. When a house is first in building, so needs must the architect should bestow pains on every part of it; not such the painter's care, he will pick out the features that are most apt for adornment. And so, methinks, it is here; to expatiate, to digress, to indulge in curiosity on every point, is for the anti-historian; your epitomist will ask to have to study briefly, and let long disquisitions be. And now, to our business! Here is preface enough; it were ill done to draw out the preamble, and leave our story cramped for room.

<sup>1</sup> Verses 20-23. The book proper begins with this preamble, in which the author is concerned, not to shift the responsibility for his statements on to *Janes* of Cynus, but to justify himself in selecting certain incidents for retelling, and omitting the rest. The exact sense of the Latin is hard to discern; it is here interpreted in conformity with the Greek text.

## CHAPTER 3

**T**IME was, the holy city was a home of content; even the laws of it were well kept; such a high priest they had, Onias, a devout man, and one that feared God. In those days, king and chieftains held the place much in reverence, and with rich gifts endowed the temple; did not Seleucus, king of Asia, defray all the cost of maintaining its sacrifices? Yet one citizen there was, Simon the Benjamite, the temple governor, that had broken against God's altar, do the high priest what he would to gainay him. And at last, when overcame Onias he might not, what did he? To Apollonius he betook himself, the son of Tharsus, that was then in charge of Coele Syria and Phoenice, and gave him great sums indeed; here was the treasury at Jerusalem stocked with treasures innumerable, here was vast public wealth, maintained by the needs of the altar, and nothing prevented but it should fall in to the king's hands.

He wenter did Apollonius find himself in the royal presence than he told the story of the razed treasure; and at that, the king sent for Heliadorn, that had charge of his affairs, and despatched him with orders to fetch the said money away. This Heliadorn set out on his journey without more ado, under colour of making a progress through the towns of Coele Syria and Phoenice, but with the king's business still in mind. And when he reached Jerusalem, and there received a gracious welcome from the high priest, he made no secret of the information he possessed, or of his errand, and he would know the truth about these moneys. A plain account the high priest gave him; some were moneys deposited on trust, for the maintenance of widows and orphans; there were some, too, belonging to Hycanus son of Tobias, a man of repute. The information was maliciously laid, nor did the whole sum amount to more than four hundred talents of silver, and two hundred of gold. Men had repaid their confidence in a city and a temple renowned throughout the world, for the high opinion they had of its sanctity; and should he pay them false? It was not to be thought of. But Heliadorn stood upon the terms of his commission; delivered to the king the money must be; there was no other way of it.

So the appointed day came, when he would visit the temple and take order in the matter; what a stir there was then in the city! Priests, in their sacred vestments, cast themselves down before the altar, and cried out upon heaven; would not be, whose law enjoined self-keeping, keep party safe for its rightful owners? And for the high priest himself, the very aspect of him was heaven-rending; such a change of look and colour betrayed his inward feelings; grief and horror were stamped on his

houses, and to all that saw him he seemed a broken man. Folk circulated as out of their houses in droves, to make public intercession in the name of their country's dignity: wretched about their waives, the women in thronged the streets, and maids that might not go abroad must yet run to the balconies, or peep out at windows, to see Onias past. Harrowed as they raised their hands, each one of them, in prayer; and pity it was to see how common folk about him were sharing the high priest's agony of suspense.

Here, then, was a whole city praying Almighty God, as how might it baffle the men who had trusted them; and here was Heliodorus carrying in out his design, already arrived at the treasury with his body-guard in attendance. All at once the spirit of God, the omnipotent, gave signal in proof of its presence; drained by the divine power they wanted and stood inactive, those ministers of wrong. What saw they? A horse, as really comprehended, that charged upon Heliodorus and struck him down with its face-fore; terrible of aspect its rider was, and his armour seemed all of gold. Two other warriors they saw, how strong of limb, as how daring of mind, how bravely clad. These stood about Heliodorus and fell to scourging him, this side and that, blow after blow, without respite. With the suddenness of his fall to the ground, darkness had closed about him; hardly they caught him up and carried him out in his litter; a helpless burden now, that caused yonder treasury with such a rubble of treasures and helms and helmets was proof of God's power most manifest. There he lay, by heaven's decree a spectacle and beyond hope as of recovery; and all around men were gazing the Lord, for thus was devaluing the honour of his sanctuary. In the temple, where all had been solitary and himself could heaven declared itself, all was rejoicing and movement now.

It was not long before friends of Heliodorus were entreating Onias to call down mercy from the most High, as one that was now at death's door. This was anxious news for the high priest; what if the king should respect the Jews of foot play? Offer sacrifice he did for the man's recovery, and with good effect. He was yet at his prayers, when those two in waistcoat, in the same hours arise, stood by Heliodorus again; Thanks thus given, they said, to the high priest Onias; at his instance, the Lord grants thee life; God's scourge thou hast felt, God's wondrous power is be over on thy lips. And with that, they were seen no more. He saw this as Heliodorus offered God sacrifice; ay, and made vows a many for his preservation, and thanked Onias heartily; then he marched his army back to the king. Everywhere he testified how great a God was this, what as strange things his own eyes had witnessed; and when the king himself asked what manner of embassy he should next send to Jerusalem. Why, as said he, some embassy of shame, some rebel that plots against the kingdom.

- Escape he with his life, I warrant he will come back to thee soundly  
 better. But doubt, there is some divine influence breeds yonder plague;  
 15 much and ward he keeps over it, that has his dwelling in heaven, to be  
 the plague and the undoing of all who cause that way upon us instead of  
 mischief.
- 20 Such is the sin of Heliodorus, and of the treasury's poisoning.

## CHAPTER 4

- AND now, what must Simon do, the same that had drawn men's eyes  
 As his country with stories of treasure, but fell to slandering Onias?  
 Onias it was, by his way of it, had egged Heliodorus on;<sup>1</sup> and been the  
 5 author of the mischief. So true a patriot, that well loved his race, well  
 guarded the divine law, and he must be branded with the name of traitor!  
 10 The feud grew worse, till at last there were murders done, and Simon's  
 nation answerable for it. Here was the public peace much endangered:  
 here was Apollonius, the governor of Coele Syria and Phoenice, adding  
 fuel to the flame of Simon's malice;<sup>2</sup> what marvel if Onias had occurred  
 15 in the king? Little enough it liked him to bring such name on his fellow  
 citizens; yet common good of the Jewish folk he must needs have in mind;  
 20 how should quiet times return, or Simon's madness be cooled, unless the  
 king took order in the matter?
- 25 But king Seleucus was done with life now, and the throne passed to  
 Antiochus, called the Liberator. And here was a brother Onias had, called  
 30 Jason, that coveted the office of high priest. This Jason went to the new  
 king, and made him an offer of three hundred talents out of his revenue,  
 35 besides eighty from other incomes. Let him be granted him to set up a  
 game-place for the training of youth, and send the men of Jerusalem dis-  
 ciples of Antioch, he would give his bond for a hundred and fifty more.
- 40 To this the king assented; high priest he became, and straight way set about  
 45 preventing his fellow countrymen to the Gentile way of living. Till now,  
 the Jews had followed their own customs, under royal privilege; it was  
 50 John that won it for them, father of that Eupolemus, who afterwards  
 went in embassy to Rome, to make a treaty of alliance. But Jason  
 would drop all these customs; common right should be none, and  
 55 great wrong should find welcome instead. This game-place of his he

<sup>1</sup> Egged Heliodorus on? some think the word used in the Greek has a quite different meaning from the usual, and that Onias was accused of having attacked Heliodorus with violence (cf. 3, 31).

<sup>2</sup> Verse 4. 'Adding fuel to the flame of Simon's malice' literally, 'adding to increase Simon's malice,' but this ridiculous phrase is probably due to a scribe's mistake.



did not scruple to set up in the very shadow of the Citadel, and debauch<sup>1</sup> all that was nobler of Judaea's youth.

Machabees in the end, think you, when such alien Greek ways came in? as May, here was flower and fruit of it; and all through the unexampled villainy of our men, this Jason, that high priest was next, but rather an arch-actor. Why, the priests themselves had no more stomach for serving the altar temple sworn, and sacrifice unshaken, off they went to the wrestling-ground, there to earn their names and win unbelieved prizes, soon as ever the fast goat was thrown! What glory their fathers had handed down to them! And some such as the Greeks cover was all their ambition now. Alas, here was a perilous contest awaiting them; as Greek fashions they would follow, and Greeks would be, that Greeks should have not long for their enemies, up, and conspirators. There it is as breaking God's laws without paying the price, there will show that. When, as the quinquennial games were being held at Tyre, in the king's presence, this vile Jason it was next come of his wretches<sup>2</sup> with a gift of three hundred silver pieces to do honour to Hercules. True it is, the honour of themselves they should not be spent on sacrifice, but on some other need that was more befitting; yet Jason's meaning was, Hercules should have as there, and if they went to the building of the fleet, it was thanks to Jason's riches.

Afterwards, Apollonius the son of Menesthen was despatched to Egypt, for the crowning of king Ptolemy Philometer. Well Antiochus knew that he was disaffected towards the royal policy, and there was his own safety to be considered. . . . He passed on to Joppa, and on to Jerusalem,<sup>3</sup> where Jason and the whole city welcomed him in state, with a carrying of torches and great humming. And so he led his army back to Ptolemais.

Three years later, Jason would send to the king certain money, as together with a report on affairs of moment; and for this caused he chose Menelaus, brother to that Simon we have before mentioned. Avowed there is gained to the king's person, Menelaus was careful to foster his goodwill there, withholding Jason by three hundred talents of silver, diverted the high-priestly succession to himself. Back he came to Jerusalem, with the royal warrant to maintain him, yet all unworthy, with a

<sup>1</sup> 'Debauch' in the Latin text here passed down in brackets, but the obvious phrase used in the Greek, 'he brought down under the law' is usually interpreted as meaning that he encouraged them to wear the horned-horned Greek panther as a symbol of devotion to Hellenism, the pagan deity of athletics.

<sup>2</sup> 'Wretches' the word found in our Latin text is probably a copyist's error for 'suppliants,' i.e., religious representations.

<sup>3</sup> This sentence, in the original, is of unexampled shamelessness. It runs, 'And when Apollonius son of Menesthen had been sent to Egypt for the crowning

- 10 tyrant's cruel heart, more wild than high priest. Then was Jason  
 supplanted, then had supplanted his own brother, and was driven to take  
 11 refuge in the Attaronian country, as for Menelaus, he got the office he  
 coveted, but never a penny paid the king of all he had promised, how-  
 12 ever upon Sosorus might be, that man in command of the Citadel. For  
 all envious of authority this fellow was unweathable, and so it fell out that  
 13 both of them were summoned to court, Menelaus leaving his high priest-  
 hood to his own brother, Lysimachus, and for Sosorus . . . he became  
 governor of Cyprus.<sup>1</sup>
- 14 It befell at this very time that the sons of Tharsus and Malus made an  
 intervention; so little it liked them that a gift should be made of their  
 15 cities to Antiochus, the king's procurator. Per-hance the king went off to  
 appease them, leaving one of his courtiers, Andronicus, to be vicerey.  
 16 Here was Menelaus' opportunity, he had gold ornaments with him, that  
 he had stolen out of the temple, and now, giving some of these as a pre-  
 sent to Andronicus, he sold the rest at Tyre and other cities in the  
 17 neighborhood. Of these doings, men men had clear proof, and there-  
 upon denounced him: Onias, that had new sithen refuge in Daphne  
 18 sanctuary, close by Antioch. What did Menelaus? He gained the ear of  
 Andronicus and demanded that Onias should pay for it with his life. So  
 the vicerey himself paid Onias a visit, swore friendship and overcame  
 his suspicions, then, when he had left sanctuary, witness scruple of con-  
 19 science put him to death. Here was great matter of indignation, and not  
 among the Jews only, the very heathen took it amiss, so great a man  
 20 should meet so unworthy an end. No sooner was the king back from  
 Cilicia than the citizens of Antioch, Jew and Gentile both, vented him  
 21 with complaints about the murder of so innocent man: whereof Anti-  
 ochan himself was heartily grieved, ay, and moved to tears of pity, such  
 22 memories he had of Onias' well-ordered, honourable life. Again he fell  
 into a rage, stripped Andronicus of his purple, and would have him led  
 away all through the streets, till he reached the very spot where he had  
 lifted his impious hand against Onias. There the sacrilegious words  
 perished, by the divine vengeance worthily repaid.
- 23 Moreover, word had gone abroad at Jerusalem, how Lysimachus was  
 ever robbing the temple, by Menelaus' countenance. Great more of gold

of king Ptolemy Philometor, Antiochus, realising that he (Onias) was estranged  
 from his (Onias') god-father, felt anxious for his own safety. And for that reason  
 (other reason?) Or perhaps, "from that place," (to what place?), he (Onias) came to  
 Egypt, and there rounded up at Jerusalem." It seems possible that the text has  
 been inaccurately transmitted.

<sup>1</sup> According to the Greek text, Sosorus left his own office in charge of Onias,  
 "who was afterwards" over the Cyrenians." The island of Cyprus belonged at this  
 time to Egypt, and only came into the Seleucid empire some years later.

was lost already; but now there was a rising of the common folk against Lytimeachus, whose numbers and their rage increasing, he was fain to get some three thousand men under arms, with one Tyrimenes at their head, that was for grace in years, and so less in folly. Lytimeachus it was that first resorted to violence: but the rabble, when they saw what he would be at, caught up stones or stout clubs for the attack, and some of them pelted him with clods. When they had wounded some of his soldiers, and filled others to earth, the rest took to their heels; and there, close beside the treasury, this robber of the temple was done to death.

And now, they most impudently accused Menelaus himself on the same charge. These calverts from the number of riders brought the whole matter before the king, when he visited Tyre, and Menelaus was as good as lost. What he did had! With the promise of a great bribe he secured the good word of Ptolemy, son of Dorymenes;<sup>1</sup> Ptolemy it was waylaid the king, as he was retired from the hunt in a covered walk of his, and put him from his purpose. So now Menelaus, that was at the cost of all the mischief, went goot free, and his unhappy soldiers, that might have cleared themselves easily enough before a score of bloodthirsty Scythians,<sup>2</sup> with their lives must pay for it. How were men come to plead for their own sins, their own people, their own temple treasures, and must they be hanged off to undeserved punishment? Even the Tyrians thought shame of it, and in a piteously fashion gave them burial. So, through the swiftness of the great, to shame Menelaus still, and his wickedness went from bad to worse, to his countryman's undoing.

## CHAPTER 5

AT this time Antiochus was preparing once more for a campaign against Egypt. And all about the city of Jerusalem, by the space of forty days together, there were strange sights appearing. High up in air, horsemen were seen riding this way and that, in vestures of gold, and spears they carried as if they went to battle, now riding in ordered ranks, now engaged in close combat. So long away they moved past, shields and belted heads and drawn swords; few javelin and shafted golden harness, a whole array of shining mail. No wonder if the prayer was on all men's lips, good men all such high visions might portend.

And now a false rumour went abroad, Antiochus had come by his death. Jason's ears it reached, and all at once, with fifty a thousand men

<sup>1</sup> Verse 25. The words 'son of Dorymenes' appear in the Greek text, but not in the Latin; they are inserted here to distinguish this Ptolemy (cf. I Mac. 5, 52) from the king of Egypt mentioned in verse 27 above.

<sup>2</sup> 'Scythians,' a barbarous race then inhabiting Russia.

at his back, he delivered an assault upon the city. Let the womenfolk run  
 the walls as they would, at last it fell, and Meneleus must take refuge  
 within the Citadel. As for Jason, he fell upon his own fellow-countrymen,  
 and that without mercy. His own flesh and blood to vanquish, what was  
 this but shameful defeat? Ay, but to him friend was foe, were there spoils  
 for the winning! Yet high priesthood he got none; disappointed of his  
 scheming, back he must go to the Antiochian country, and there, marked  
 down for death by king Antioch of the Asidians, fled from city to city.  
 An outlaw, hunted and shamed by his kind, of a whole land, of a whole  
 race, the common foe, he was driven out into Egypt; and in making  
 his way to Leucocomea, as if to find refuge there by right of kinship,  
 died miserably. In exile he died, that had brought exile on so many;  
 cast away without dirge or dole, thus left so many tombstones in a strange  
 land unheeded, that might have stood in his fathers' grave.

Here was news to make the king doubt whether the Jews were loyal to  
 him, and back he came from Egypt in a great taking of rage. He occupied  
 the city, and that by force of arms; then he bade his troops go about  
 killing, with no quarter for any they met; for a man but show his face on  
 the house-top, he must be slain with the rest. Fell young and old  
 alike; children with their mothers must die, nor maidenhood was spared,  
 nor helpless infancy. By the end of three days, eighty thousand had been  
 counted, forty thousand held as prisoners, and as many more sold into  
 slavery.

Who might all this content him with Meneleus for his guide, that was  
 raised to faith and faith, what must he do but make his way into God's  
 temple, bolder in all the world is none? What, should those sacred orna-  
 ments, dedicated by kings and peoples for the more splendour and worthi-  
 ness of it, be caught up in his impious hands, passed and doled by his  
 touch? Surely he had taken leave of his wit, this Antiochus; how should  
 he know that this sanctuary, for none, would lack the divine protection?  
 And only because, for a little, God's anger was provoked by sin of the  
 men that dwelt there? Free had they been from the meshes of such  
 guile, Antiochus, too, should have been greeted with a drubbing, as  
 Heliodorus was, the man king Seleucus sent to rob the treasury, and  
 should have learned to leave his rash purpose. But what would you?  
 People it was God chose, and city for people's sake; chastisement that  
 fell on the people, city must rot, and soon share its poor fortune. He, the  
 omnipotent, the ruler of all, would leave Jerusalem feature in his anger,  
 would raise her to heights of glory, his anger soon appeased.

Antiochus, then, came away from the temple a thousand and eight  
 hundred talents the richer; and back he went to Antioch, all at reckless  
 speed; he had not scrupled to sail his fleet over the plain, smack his troops  
 across the sea, his heart so swelled with pride in his doings. As for the

Jewish folk, he left viceroys of his own to harry them; in Jerusalem Philip, that was a Phrygian born, and could his own master in cruelty; as is Gerdias Antiochus' and Menelaus, heavier burden of all for the folk to bear. But he would do worse by the Jews yet; or why did he send out as Apollonius, the arch-maggy, and a force of twenty-two thousand, to cut off manhood in its flower, women and children to sell for slaves? This is Apollonius, when he reached Jerusalem, was all professions of friendship, and nothing did until the sabbath came round, when the Jews kept holiday. Then he put his men under arms, and butchered all that were as out to keep festival; to and fro he went about the stream, with armed fellows at his heels, and made a great massacre.

Meanwhile Judas Maccabeus, and nine others with him, went out to into the desert, where they lived like wild beasts on the mountain-side, better lodge there with herbs for food, than be party to the general debauchery.

## CHAPTER 6

NOT long after, the king despatched one of the senators at Antioch, with orders he should compel the Jewish people, custom of their fathers and law of their God to forsake. The temple at Jerusalem must be profaned, and dedicated now to Jupiter Olympian; as for the temple on Gerizim, the Samaritans were to call it, as well they might,<sup>1</sup> after Jupiter the god of strangers. What a storm of troubles broke then upon the regionward, more grievous to be heard! All riot and revelling the temple houses, once the Gerizim had it, here was dallying with bacchus, and women making their way into the sacred precincts, and bringing in of things abominable, with forbidden meats, to the law's injury, the very altar graced. Sabbath none would observe, nor keep holiday his fathers kept; even the name of Jew was disclaimed. Instead, they were so careless on the king's birthday, though it were cruelly and under duress; and when the feast of Liber came round, make procession they went in Liber's honour, gallanted with ivy each one. And now, among all the neighbouring chieft, a decree went out, whereby the Ptolemies<sup>2</sup> were the prime moving; all alike should constrain the Jews to do sacrifice, and those that would not fall in with Gentile ways, with their lives must pay for it.

<sup>1</sup> 'as well they might' literally, 'according as they were.' The author seems to be warning the Samaritans with their Greco-Roman origin. But the threat might mean 'according as they gained their request'; Josephus alleges that the Samaritans themselves asked leave of the king to re-dedicate their temple.

<sup>2</sup> 'The Ptolemies' the Greek has 'Ptolemy' cf. note on 4:41.

10 Here were sights to be seen most pitiable. Two mothers there were,  
 denounced for the transgression of their own laws; what, think you, befell  
 them? Both must be driven through the streets, with the children hang-  
 11 ing about their breasts, and cast headlong from the battlements! At another  
 time, Ptolemy had information that certain Jews were meeting in caves  
 near at hand, to keep the sabbath there without remark. Not one of these  
 would lift a hand to help himself, so great was their hatred of the day's  
 observance, and all were burned to death.

12 Reader, by these tales of ill fortune be not too much dismayed; behold  
 them, all this came about for the punishment of our race, not for its  
 13 undoing. A mark of signal favour it is, when the Lord is quick to observe,  
 14 not less the sinner sin as unrepented. See how he deals with ungodly  
 nations, waiting patiently to take full toll when the hour comes for  
 15 judgment! Not so with us; for our guilt he will not delay reckoning, and  
 16 claim strict vengeance at last. Towards us, his mercy is insatiable;  
 17 chaste as he will with adversity, but fickle as a river. So much, reader,  
 for thy warning; and now go we back to our history.

18 Here was Eleazar, one of the chief scribes, a man of great age and of  
 noble features, being required to eat swine's flesh; but though they held  
 19 his mouth open they could not force him to eat. He would rather die  
 gloriously than live defiled as he went, of his own accord, to the place  
 20 of torture, staining every step of the path that lay before him. He must  
 endure all in patience, rather than taste, for loss of life, the forbidden  
 21 meat. Old friends among the tyrants, out of misplaced kindness, took  
 him aside and urged him to seek for meat of some other kind, which he  
 could taste without scruple; he could pretend to have obeyed the king's  
 22 will by eating the sacrilegious food, and his life should no longer be for-  
 23 feit. Such kind offices old friendship claimed; but he thought rather of  
 the reverence that was due to his great age, of his venerable grey hairs,  
 of a life blamelessly lived from childhood onwards. True to the precepts  
 of God's holy law, he answered that they would do better to send him  
 24 to his grave and have done with it. It does not suit my time of life, said  
 he, to play a part. What of mercy that would here, younger than myself,  
 who would think that Eleazar, at the age of ninety, had turned Orestes?  
 25 To gain a brief hour of this perishable life, shall I play a trick on them,  
 shall I disfigure this hoary head of mine and bring down a curse on it?  
 26 No! My sentence here I may avoid if I will, but God's slaughter hand,  
 or living or dead, escape I may not. Let me take leave of life with a good  
 27 in grace, as best suits my years, bespokening to men younger than myself  
 an example of courage meeting, with steady resolve, an honourable death,  
 for the sake of Israel holy and august as ours are. And so without more  
 28 ado he was led away to his tormentors: his attendants were in a rage,  
 that but now had been gentle with him; pride, they would have it, spite

have. And this was the last sight he uttered, as he lay there dying under the lash, Lord, in thy holy wisdom this thou well knowest; I might have had life if I would, yet never a cruel pang my body endure, but my soul suffers it gladly for thy redemption. Thus he died, not only to those a younger man he spoke of, but to our whole race, leaving the pattern of a brave and honourable death.

## CHAPTER 7

SEVEN brothers there were, that lay under arrest, and their mother with them; these too were tortured at the king's command, to see if whip and thong would not make them eat swine's flesh, for all their torments. And thus spoke out one of them in the name of the rest: Why dost thou put us to the question? What avails would thou learn? Of this be sure, we had rather die than break the dietary law given us of our fathers. The king, in a rage, would have fire-pots heated, and children of Isaccus, heated they were, and then he passed judgement upon this same spokesman: Tongue of him should be cut out, scap ribs off, hands and feet mutilated, while mother and brethren stood by to see it; then, as he lay, he was for the fire; they should roast him alive in a caldron. These asked the man with their mother, such blaspheming offer to die bravely: God was true, said they, and will not allow us to go thence hurt. Did not Moses prophesy as much, even in his song of remembrance, He will comfort his servants?<sup>1</sup>

He died the first, and now the second must make sport for them. When the hair was torn from his head and the skin with it, they asked, Would he eat, or must his whole body pay for it, limb by limb? And he answered in good round Hebrew,<sup>2</sup> eat he would not; whereupon he, in his turn, suffered like the first. As, moreover, he said with his last breath, of this presents life it lies in thy power to rob us; but he, who is ruler of the whole world, he, for whose law we perish, will raise us up again, and to life overliving. And now they had their will with the third, who was no sooner hidden than he put forth tongue and hands very courageously. Heaven's gift these be, he said, and for God's law I make light account of them, well assured he will give them back to me. Well might they be marvel, king and courtiers both, at one so young that recked so little of his sufferings. Such was the manner of his passing; the fourth, too, when with like requests they assailed him, died with these words on his lips: as

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 34:9ff.

<sup>2</sup> 'In good round Hebrew,' that is, in the Aramaic dialect, as if to clinch his attitude of defiance by refusing to address his persecutors in Greek.

- Man's sentence of death, what matters it, so there be hope in God, that  
shall raise up the dead? For thee, resurrection to new life shall be none.  
And when the fifth was put to the question, he looked Aristobolus in the  
face, thus warning him: Mortal, at thy own whim free to govern thy  
fellow men, think not God has abandoned this race of ours! What but  
a link, and good proof thou shalt have of his sovereign power, such tor-  
ment does and shall remain. So they came to the sixth, and this was his  
dying utterance: Never flatter thyself with vain hope, spend no smiles,  
it was our vote doing, that stood against our God. Strange to his death-  
lapse with us, yet think not thou so easily God acquainted.  
And here was the greatest marvel of all, by hottest folk ever to be kept  
in mind, that the mother of seven children should be content to lose  
them all in one day, for the hope she had in God's mercy. What ge-  
nerosity of mind was this, that could temper her womanly feelings with a  
man's thoughts! One by one, in the speech of her own country, she put  
heart into them; Into this womb you came, she told them, who know  
how? Not I quickened, not I the breath of life gave you, nor fashioned  
the bodies of you one by one! Man's birth, and the origin of all things,  
he derived was in the whole world's Maker; and shall he not give the  
breath of life back to you, that for his law's sake hold your lives so cheap?  
What should Aristobolus do? Here was defiance of his authority, here  
were tokens of nonresistance that filled him with. The youngest son lived  
yet; for him, what accompanier, what royal assurances of wealth and  
happiness? Would he but leave the law of his fathers, he should be the  
king's friend, and have weighty matters entrusted to him. But yield the  
boy would not; till at last the king beckoned the mother apart;  
mother of ten should be the wiser yet. Much ado he had to win her,  
but she agreed at last, counsel her son she would. And a fine trick she  
played on the bloodthirsty tyrant, leaning over her son and counselling  
him in her own native speech, to this effect: Nine months in the womb  
I bore thee, three years at the breast fed thee, reared thee to be what thou  
art; and now, my son, this boon grant me. Look round at heaven and  
earth and all they contain; behold thou that of all this, and of mankind  
too, God is maker. Of this butcher have thou no fear; claim rightful share  
among thy brethren in yonder inheritance of death; so shall the divine  
mercy give me back all my sons at once.  
Before ever she had finished speaking, the boy cried out, What  
dillyng is this? To the king's law I owe no allegiance; none I live by in  
the law we had through Moses. Aesch-carry of the Jewish men, diddest  
thou so escape from God's hand? Certainly if we suffer, grievously we  
have sinned; chides he for a little, the Lord our God, he does but school,  
does but correct us, to us, his worshippers, he will be reconciled again.  
But thou, miserable wretch, vile on earth is none, wouldst thou vent thy



rage on these worshippers of him, and flatter myself with vain hopes upon the Lord? Trust me, thou shalt yet abide his judgement, who is God in almighty and all-seeing. Brief pains, that under his warman have asked us my brethren of eternal life! And shall not those, by his sentence, pay the deserved penalty of thy pride? As my brethren, so I for our country's or love both soul and body health; my prayer is, God will early return towards this nation, while thou dost leave, under the lash of his vengeance, that he alone is God. And may the divine anger, that has justly fallen on us our race, with us and these others be held in mind.

No wonder if this last, that so belied the king's rage, was more harshly used than all the others; yet kept he ever his confidence in the Lord, and made a clean end of it. And at length, when all her sons were a gone, it was the mother's turn to die.

Enough! Of delicious sacrifice and infernal cruelty you shall hear no more.

## CHAPTER 8

NOW turn we to Judas Machabeus and his company. Secretly they made entry into the villages, whence they summoned both kinsmen and friend of theirs, ay, and raised many more, that were yet true to the Jewish faith, till they had gathered an army of six thousand men. And as near they brought the Lord, he would look with favour on a race devoted to him, have pity on a people skilled by the brethren. Their city was like to be razed to the ground; would he watch the walls of it unmov'd? Would he be deaf, while bloodshed cried out for vengeance? Could he gaze on innocent childhood, his own honour dragged in the dirt, would he not mark all this, and be roused to indignation?

By this, the divine anger had given place to clemency; and to all the brethren round about Machabeus and his company were an infusion past bearing. On village in town of theirs he would fall suddenly, and leave it to the ground; by seizing some point of advantage, once and again he put their forces to the test; going about three furlongs at night-time for the most part, till the fame of his valour spread far and wide. What was to be done? Here was a man that grew ever in strength, and still his enterprises thrived. At last Philip was fain to send dispatches, calling on Ptolemy, the governor of Coele Syria and Phoenicia, to further the king's business. And he, without more ado, chose out of his best friends, a Nicator son of Parrechia, and sent him out to exterminate the Jewish race altogether. For which purpose, he armed full twenty thousand men, a rabble of all nations; and Gorgias should be at Nicator's side, a soldier that had much experience in the war.

- 12 Nimrod's purpose it was, to sell the Jewish people for slaves, and  
 thereby reimburse the king for a tribute of two thousand talents he must  
 13 needs pay to Rome. So, before night else was done, he sent word to the  
 kings on the sea coast, crying a sale of Jewish captives, and offering  
 them at slavery for the talent; so little did he guess what divine vengeance  
 14 was to overtake him. No sooner did Judas hear of Nimrod's coming,  
 15 than he gave warning of it to the Jews who bore him company. Some  
 of these, cowardly souls that put no trust in God's rewarding, took refuge  
 16 in flight; the rest made shift to sell all the goods they yet had, crying out  
 upon the Lord to deliver them from such an impious wretch as would  
 17 sell their lives, and conquer them alive. Themselves if he nothing re-  
 garded, let him remember at least the covenant made with their fathers;  
 the covenant, too, of that holy name they bore.  
 18 As for Machabees, he called together the Jews, discourses that fol-  
 lowed him, and warned them they should make no terms with the enemy,  
 nor be affrighted by a great rabble of men coming against them in so ill  
 19 a cause. Courage! he said; forbear ye of the unarm'd their hands  
 have outraged of a city wronged and mocked, of immemorial traditions  
 20 overturned! What gives them confidence? Weapons of war, and their  
 own daring. Ours to trust in his omnipotence, who with a single rod  
 21 both them our adversaries and the whole world besides can smite. He  
 put them in mind, moreover, of God's signal mercy showed to their  
 forefathers; how Sennacherib's army perished, a hundred and eighty  
 22 thousand strong; how they fought the Galatians at Babylon, with Mac-  
 chabeus slain, whose heart failed them at the encounter, and six thousand  
 Jews, alone but for heaven's aid, made havoc of a hundred and twenty  
 23 thousand men, much to the common advantage.<sup>1</sup> With such words as  
 these he put heart into them, till they were ready to die for law and  
 country's sake.  
 24 And now he put the several commands of his army in charge of his  
 brethren, Simon, Joseph and Jonathan, entrusting one thousand five  
 25 hundred men to each; Judas<sup>2</sup> was hidden round about from the enemy's  
 sightings, and the watchword was given, God's Aid. And with that, out  
 26 went Judas at the head of his army, and engaged the enemy. Such help  
 the Almighty gave them, they cut down more than nine thousand men;  
 and the rest of Nimrod's disabled forces must needs take to their heels.  
 27 All the money that had been paid for their enslaving fell into Jewish  
 28 hands, and they gave the enemy chase far and wide, only once hindering  
 them; the mischief was coming on, and pursue further they might not.

<sup>1</sup> His other record of this engagement has been preserved in vi.

<sup>2</sup> For 'Judas' the Greek text has 'Eleazar,' meaning presumably Judas' brother.  
 If the Latin reading is right, Judas must be some person not elsewhere men-  
 tioned.

Arms and spoils of the fallen they gathered in, and so fell to keeping the sabbath, blessing the Lord for the deliverance he had won that day, the day refreshing dew of his mercy. The sabbath day over, they gave a share of the spoils to crippled folk, orphans and widows; they and their should have the rest. And when this was done, they made public intercession, beseeching the Lord, that was so merciful, to be reconciled with his servants for good and all.

Other invaders they slew, twenty thousand of them and more, under Nicanor and Timotheus; and when they seized their high fortresses, and had spoil to divide in plenty, once more cripples and orphans and widows, and the aged folk too, must have a share to match their own. Weapons of war they gathered with all care, and bestowed where they were most needed; it was the rest of the spoil they carried back to Jerusalem. At this time they slew Philarchus, that had been of Timotheus' company, a man stained with crime, and many ways a persecutor of the Jewish people. There was Callisthenes, too, that had burnt down the gates of the sanctuary; when all Jerusalem was rejoicing over the victory, he took refuge within doors, and they burnt the place down about his ears; he too was served right for his godless doings. As for Ninnor, that was the arch-villain of all, and would have sold the Jews to a thousand slave-dealers, the very men whose lives he held so cheap had now, it is by divine aid, hounded him to the dust. Bate of office he must lay by, and slink by country ways all unattended to Antioch. A fine home-coming, this, with the loss of a whole army! Whence were the Jewish captives that should have paid off the tribute to Rome? He was fain to confess, now, that the Jews had God himself for their protector, and, would they but keep his laws, there was no conquering them!

## CHAPTER 9

ANTIOCHUS himself, at this time, had a sorry home-coming from Persia. He had made his way into the city they call Persepolis, thinking to plunder its temple and of itself have the mastery; but the common folk ran to arms and routed him. So he was a man defamed and disreputable when he reached Ecbatana, and there news came to him of how Nicanor had died, and Timotheus. And now, in a great taking of rage, he would make the Jews suffer for the ignominy of his own defeat; on, on his charger must he ride, and never a halt in the journey, with the divine vengeance ever at his heels. Had he not boasted, Jerusalem was his goal, and he would bury the Jewish race under the ruins of it?

The Lord, himself God, how should aught escape his scrutiny? The

words were barely uttered, when he smote Antiochus with such a blow, there was neither smothering nor discovering it. A deadly gripping it was that took him, with cruel torment of the bowels; firing toward the one that had often tortured his fellows, and to the narrow, in unexampled fashion. Even so, he would not leave his wicked purpose; with pride unshaken, still breathing out fiery threats against the Jewish folk, he pressed forward on his errand, till of a sudden, in full career, down fell he from his chariot, and never a limb but was racked grievously by the fall. What a living proof was this of God's power, when he was struck to earth, and must finish his journey by land, one that boasted, till now, he could rise beyond man's measure, the sea's waves gauge, and rough mountains in the balance! Bred worse at last in that sinful body, and he lived yet, though miserably enough, to see his own flesh so sore, till his own nose could not bear the foul stench of hurt: it was but yesterday the very same seemed within his reach, and never a man now would carry to feed a burden.

11. What marvel, if the swelling pride of him ebbed away, and heaven's judgements brought him to himself? With every moment his sorrows grew, and the foul breath of his disease was past his own bearing. *Alas*, said he, to God all must bow; mortals we are, and god ourselves we may not. Nay, he made suit to the Lord, vile wretch though he were, hoping all in vain to win mercy. Fugitive, his home to lay Jerusalem in ruins, and make a mockery of it; a fine city it should be thenceforward. Gudge the Jewish folk brutal, give their nation no bid and boast, make us and of them, children and all. Nay, such high privileges they should have as the wealthiest of Athens hold. And for that sacred temple he had stripped bare, with chains gifts he would enrich it, furnishing it as never before, and defraying, from his own purse, all the cost of its sacrifices. 12. Nay, he would become a Jew himself, would go the rounds of earth, proclaiming everywhere the divine power!

13. But all to no avail; the vengeance of God, well earned, had overtaken him, and find relief he might not. So now, despairing of that, he wrote to the Jews in very humble fashion, as here follows.<sup>1</sup> To his loyal Jewish subjects Antiochus, their king and general, sends greeting, health, and happiness! Thrive you and yours, and thrive prosperously, I am well content. For myself, I am in ill case, yet think ever kindly of you. On my way home from Persia, so grievous a strangerer has fallen upon me, so needs must I should take heed for the public safety. Despair I will not: there is good hope yet of my recovery. But this thought weighs with me; when he went campaigning in the high countries, my father gave

<sup>1</sup> Verses 13-17. It seems probable that this proclamation was sent to all Antiochus' subjects, the Jews receiving it among others. The document referred to at the end of verse 17 is no longer extant.

out who was to succeed him; should might go wrong, and all tidings come, as every governor in his own province must know his duty without fear of confusion. And here he prisms all about, I know it well, waiting upon events and ready to go with the times. Hie to the throne, there, I erode must designate. Again and again, when I set out for the high countries, I engaged my son Antiochus to the general care. And now this wretched commission I have sent him . . . As you love me, then, bethink you of as those benefits you have received, both publicly and in private; keep faith, each and all of you, with me and with my son. I doubt not he will show it himself his father's true heir, ever courteous, and kindly, and easy of approach.

So did he; wretchedly enough, the murderer, the blasphemer; out in to the hill country far away from home. Cruel the blow that struck him down, as he had ever been cruel in his dealings. His body was brought in home again, Philip, his foster-brother, came back with it, and then took refuge in Egypt with Ptolemy Philometor, so little he trusted the young prince Antiochus.

## CHAPTER 10

**M**ANFULLY, God aiding, Mithriates and his followers had recovered both temple and city. Down came the altar Gentile folk had set up in the open streets, down came the statues, and the temple was purged of its defilement. They made a fresh altar, struck flint from flint, and offered sacrifice again after two years' intermission, rose incense, burned hump, bones were set out on the sacred table once more. Then, bowing down to earth, they made petition to the Lord, never again such calamity might overtake them; as if they did, himself in his great mercy should chastise them, not hand them over into the cruel power of blasphemous enemies. It so fell out, that the temple was purified on the twenty-fifth day of Casleu, the very time of its profanation by the Gentiles. Eight days of rejoicing they kept, with such ceremonies as belong to the feast of Tabernacles; it was a feast of tent-dwelling indeed they had kept a while back, when they lodged like beasts among the hill-side caverns! Now that God had made the way clear for his temple's cleansing, what wonder if they set up in his hallowed branches, and green boughs, and arbours of palm? What wonder if a decree was passed, by common consent, all Jewry should keep the festival year by year?

Now the story is told, how Antiochus called the blasphemous name by his end, ran we to his son, Antiochus Epiphanes, that was born of a very in El father; record we in brief the history of his reign, and the hazards of

<sup>1</sup> The Greek word 'Epiphanes' means 'best of a noble father.'

11 war that went with it. Upon his accession, this king entrusted all the  
business of the realm to one Lyfias, commander of the forces in Phoenicia  
12 and Coele Syria. With Pholomus, that was called Maon, we are concerned  
no more; this would he have made amends to the Jews for the wrong done  
13 there, and kept their friendship, but for that very reason he was de-  
nounced to Eupator by his courtiers. He was a traitor, they said, twice  
over, false to his trust, when Pholomus left him in charge of Cyprus, and  
14 not wary of his new allegiance to Antiochus! Whereupon he put an end  
to his own life by poison. When Gorgias was given command of the dis-  
trict, he was for ever making war on the Jews, with mercenaries to aid  
15 him; and there were castles of the country besides,\* well walled in  
their strongholds, that gave welcome to deserters from Jerusalem, and  
so filled the faces of enemies.

16 And now the followers of Machabees, after prayer made for the divine  
assistance, delivered an attack upon the Edomite strongholds. These,  
by a very courageous assault, they occupied, and cut down all they met,  
17 putting far less than twenty thousand men to the sword; but there were  
two fortresses yet remaining, into which the survivors threw them-  
selves, well provided with means of defence. Machabees himself went  
off to fight other battles of greater moment, leaving Simon, Joseph and  
Zacharias, with a strong force under their command, to carry on the  
18 siege. And here the saviour of Simon's men was their undoing; for a  
herb of seventy thousand silver pieces, they allowed some of the de-  
fenders to escape. Machabees no sooner heard of it, than he summoned  
the leaders of the people, and arraigned the guilty men in their presence;  
what, would they sell their brethren's lives, by letting the enemies of  
19 their race go free? So he put these traitors to death; and for the strong-  
holds, he conquered both of them at a blow, so carrying all before him  
by force of arms, that twenty thousand of the defenders perished.

20 But Timotheus could not be content with one defeat at the hands of  
the Jews; he would bring in hordes of foreign soldiers, and carry from  
21 Ashd, threatening Judaea with slavery. At his coming, the party of  
Machabees fell to prayer; such as their hands, unclenched about their  
22 loins, they lay prostrate at the altar's foot, entreating the Lord he would  
espouse their quarrel, and their lives should be his; the law had promised  
23 it. Then, this supplication made, they took up arms and marched out,  
leaving the city far away in their rear, not once halted till they were close  
24 to the enemy's lines. Soon as the dawn broke, they engaged; on the one  
side, all true to the Lord, valour's best pledge of victory and fairer  
time; on the other, taught but human eagerness to inspire courage.  
25 Hard went the day, and, as it turned to the evening, neither had

\* *Μακρὰς τῆς χώρας*, literally, in the Latin version, 'Jews,' but this is  
probably a copyist's mistake for 'Edomites,' the reading found in the Greek text.

part. Five horsemen came riding, with splendid trappings of gold, to lead the Jews onward; and two of these served Machabees for escort, covering him with their shields to keep all hurt away from him. With shaft of darting, lightning of thrust, dented and dismayed, the enemy fell to earth: twenty thousand and five hundred of them perished that day, a besides six hundred of the cavalry.

As for Timotheus, he took refuge in Gazara, a strong fortress that lay under the command of Chorusus. Four days together, Machabees and his men eagerly pressed on the siege of it; but the defenders were confident in its strength; loud their defiance was, and very blasphemous the words they uttered. Stung by these taunts, twenty warriors of Machabees' company made a bold stroke on the wall as the fifth day was dawning, and, by the fierceness of their onslaught, made shift to climb it; others, following at their heels, fell to burning towers and gateway alike, and made a bonfire of the blasphemers. For two whole days they smothered the fort, and at last came upon Timotheus' in his hiding-place; so they made an end of him, his brother Chorusus and Apollonides perishing with him. When all was over, they sang hymns of praise and gave thanks to the Lord, that had done marvellous things for Israel, and granted them victory.

## CHAPTER 11

IT was but a short respite they had: Lyttas, a kinsman of Antiochus that was repute and managed his affairs for him, was not a little concerned over these happenings, and he marched on Judaea at the head of eighty thousand men, with all the cavalry he could muster. Here was a city worth the capture, for Gentile folk to dwell in; here was a temple that would yield a fine spoil, as temples did everywhere; a priesthood, too, that might be put up for sale year after year. Of all this he bethought him, never of God's avenging power; blindly he trusted in his foot-soldiers by the ten thousand, his horsemen by the thousand, in his elephants that numbered five score. Upon marching into Judaea he first reached Bethoron,<sup>1</sup> that stood in a narrow pass five furlongs away from Jerusalem, and laid siege to the citadel of it.

What did Machabees and his Sikem, when they learned that the siege of the fortress was already begun? Most piously they besought the Lord, vailed the tears of a whole populace, a gracious angel he would

<sup>1</sup> If the text here is sound, the Timotheus mentioned in this is a different person.

<sup>2</sup> If the reading 'Bethoron' is correct, the reference must be to some other fortress of that name, not to the well-known Bethoron, more than ten miles away.

1 send out for Israel's deliverance. Then they armed for battle, Macha-  
 2 beus himself the first of all, as he summoned the rest to start with him  
 3 at the hour of danger, for the relief of their brethren. So, in good heart,  
 they set out together, and before they left Jerusalem a vision came to  
 4 them of a rider that went before them in white array, with armour of  
 5 gold, brandishing his spear. How they blessed God's mercy, all of them,  
 6 at the sight! How their courage rose, a match for all it should encounter,  
 7 man or wild beast or walls of iron! They marched on, ready for battle,  
 8 more now of a heavenly champion, and of the Lord's favour; and when  
 they changed the enemy, they were very lions for valour. At their en-  
 9 counter, fell eleven thousand of the foe, fell a thousand and six hundred  
 10 of the horses; and the whole army took to its heels, for the most part  
 wounded and alarmed; Lysias himself, ignominiously enough, rained and  
 fled.

11 Yet good sense he lacked not; great loss he had sustained, and, for the  
 Hebrews constant to rely for aid upon divine Omnipotence, he saw  
 12 there was no conquering them. So he wrote, offering to conclude ben-  
 13 ignable terms with them, and secure them the king's friendship. As for  
 Machabæus, he consented to what Lysias asked, having no thought but  
 for the common good; and the witness names he proposed to Lysias to  
 the Jewish people's name received the royal assent.

14 The letter sent to the Jews by Lysias was after this manner: Lysias,  
 15 to the people of the Jews, all hail! Your envoys, John and Abisaius,  
 handed me a written petition, and desired that I would give effect to the  
 16 terms of it. All that needed to be known, I have made clear to the king's  
 grace, and he has granted what great he could. Doubt not I will be a  
 good witness in your cause hereafter, so you abide loyal to the king's  
 17 interests. Meanwhile I have given a verbal message to your envoys and  
 18 mine, which they will impart to you. Farewell. Given on this twenty-  
 fourth day of Diocorus, in the hundred and forty-eighth year.

19 And of the king's own letters, the tenour was this: King Antiochus, to  
 20 his good cousin Lysias, all hail! Now that our father has found his  
 place among the gods, it is fit on to see that our subjects live at peace,  
 21 and go quietly about their business. But of one nation, the Jews, we  
 hear that they resisted our father's will, who would have had them con-  
 form to the Greek way of living; to their own tradition they held fast,  
 and their plea is, we should grant them the enjoyment of their rights in  
 22 the matter. And whereas we would have this nation live peaceably like  
 the rest, we may and decree that their temple should be restored to them,  
 23 and that they should follow the custom of their forefathers. Do as the  
 Romans, then, to send word and give them assurance of this; we will  
 make known, let them take heart, and order their own affairs accordingly.

24 To the Jews themselves the king wrote as follows: King Antiochus, to



the elders and people of the Jews, all healthy! Thine ye as well as our- selves, we are well content. Antiochus has brought us word, you would ye take leave free intercourse with the men of your race who dwell in these parts;<sup>1</sup> and we hereby grant safe conduct to all of you that would travel as here, up to the thirtieth day of Xanthikos . . . That the Jewish folk may eat what food they will, use what laws they will, according to their ancient custom; and if aught has been done amiss through inadvertence, none of them, for that cause, shall be molested. We are sending Menelaus to besides, to give a charge to you. Farewell. Given on the thirtieth day of Xanthikos, in the hundred and forty-ninth year.

The Romans, too, wrote to them after the manner following. Quirinus is Menelaus and Titus Manlius, envoys of Rome, to the Jewish people, all healthy! The privileges Lydas has granted you in the name of his royal cousin, we hereby ratify. Other matters he has reserved to the king's decision; take counsel among yourselves, and let us know at once what your mind is, if you would have us order all to your liking. Even now we are on the road to Antioch; write speedily, to let us know how you are or minded. Farewell. Given on the twenty-fifth day of Xanthikos, in the hundred and forty-ninth year.

## CHAPTER 12

SO all was agreed upon; Lydas was for the court again, and the Jewish folk went back to their flames. But neither rest nor respite might they have while Timotheus<sup>2</sup> and Apollonius, son of Genneteus, were left at their post; Pharezyruses, too, and Demophanes, and Ninnæus that ruled in Cyprus.

This was a very foul deed done by the men of Joppa; they fired out certain vessels of theirs, and would have the neighbouring Jews go aboard, with their wives and children, for all the world as if there were no grudge between them. It was the common wish of their fellow-citizens; how should the Jews gainsay it? They were lovers of peace, and cause for suspicion had none. Yet once they were on the high seas, they were cast overboard and drowned, a full two hundred of them. Such tidings of a cruel murder done upon men of his own race, Judas could not bear unmoved; upbraiding his followers, and calling upon God, that judges aright, to speed him, he marched out against the daymen of his brethren.

<sup>1</sup> Verses 49-51. The situation is not made fully clear, either in the Greek text or in the Latin. There seems to be a gap between verses 50 and 51, perhaps due to mistakes in the manuscripts. The phrase is better translated 'through inadvertence' or perhaps only a diplomatic formula for granting a general amnesty.

<sup>2</sup> For Timotheus, see verse 10 to 12, 37.

at dead of night he burned down their wharves, and set all the ships  
 ablaze, not any man that escaped the fire but was put to the sword. This  
 done, he left them, but threatening he would return, and leave some alive  
 in Joppa. He had word, too, that the men of Jamnia meant to do the  
 same by the Jews in their port, so he fell on Jamnia, too, by night, and  
 burnt both wharves and ships there; the light of that blaze was seen at  
 Jerusalem, thirty miles off. . . .

Now perhaps they had reached, on their way to meet Timotheus,  
 when an Arab force engaged them, of five thousand foot and five hundred  
 horse.<sup>1</sup> Sora was the unconquerer, but with God's help they won the day  
 and the defeated remnants of the Arabs asked Judas for quarters, promising  
 a grant of pasture-lands, with other advantages. And, beyond doubt,  
 they could be many ways serviceable to him, so he made terms with  
 them. They swore friendship, and the Arabs went back to their tents.

A city there was called Caphla, moored and walled about for its  
 defence, and held by a rabble of many names; this, too, Judas attacked.

Such trust the defenders had in the strength of their ramparts, and their  
 plentiful supplies of food, they carried themselves recklessly, heaping  
 taunts at Judas, with blasphemies and other vile little fits to be atoned.

But Machabeus to that King made appeal, who worked neither magic  
 nor burning-iron, in Josiah's day, to bring Jericho down to ruins; a storm  
 struck he delivered upon the walls, and, as God willed, became master  
 of the city. The slaughter in it was past reckoning; there was a pool hard  
 by, of two fathoms' breadth, that seemed as if it ran in full tide with the  
 blood of slain men.

It needed a march of thirty-five miles to bring them to Chana, where  
 the Jews were when they call Tobiasseus. Yet could they not come  
 up with Timotheus, he had retired, with nothing achieved, leaving a  
 strong garrison in one of the forts there, which garrison of his, ten  
 thousand strong, was destroyed by one of Machabeus' captains, Doai-  
 s then and Scopator. Machabeus himself, with six thousand men at his  
 heels, divided into companies, pressed on against Timotheus, that had a  
 thousand and twenty thousand foot, and two thousand five hundred horse,  
 under his command. At the news of Judas' coming, Timotheus was fain  
 to tread on rocks, children, and asses, to Canaan, an impassable  
 fortress and one difficult of approach, so narrow the pass was. And now  
 the last of Judas' companies came in sight, and with it the presence of  
 the all-seeing God.<sup>2</sup> What fear fell upon the enemy, how they retreated

<sup>1</sup> The mention of Timotheus and of the Arabs would suggest that this incident  
 took place beyond Jordan, rather than in the Jamnia neighbourhood. It seems  
 possible there is a gap in the text.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek implies that the divine presence was in some way visibly mani-  
 fested.

in flight, stumbling over their own fellows, wounded by the point of their own swords! And all the while Judas pressed them hard, the 22  
 courage of his men; thirty thousand of them that day he slaughtered.  
 As for Timotheus, he fell into the hands of another force, under Dem- 23  
 stas and Sosipater; of these he begged earnestly for his life, telling them  
 of Jewish hostages in his keeping, their own fathers and brothers, that 24  
 would get no quarter if he came by his death. Many were the pledges he  
 gave, covenanting for the restoration of those hostages, and at last, for 25  
 love of their brethren, they let him go free.

Judas went on to Carthage, where the enemy lost twenty-five thousand 26  
 men, killed and slain; thence to Sychara, a fortified city, where stout 27  
 warriors of many different kinds manned the walls most valiantly, well  
 provided with engines and weapons. Yet strength is none can hold its 28  
 own against the Omnipotent; so him the Jews made appeal, and so took  
 the city, killing twenty-five thousand of the defenders. And thence to 29  
 Scythopolis, at seventy-five miles' distance from Jerusalem; but here the 30  
 Jews themselves bore witness, how kindly their neighbours used them,  
 and how humanely they carried themselves even in troublesome times.  
 Thinking all such, and desiring them they would continue their good 31  
 offices towards the Jewish folk, the army returned to Jerusalem, to keep  
 the festival of the Weeks.

Then, after Pentecost, they marched away to meet Gorgias, that was 32  
 in command of Idumea;<sup>1</sup> it was but a number of three thousand foot 33  
 and four hundred horse.<sup>2</sup> Battle was joined, and some few Jews fell. 34  
 As for Gorgias, and Daskheus, a great warrior that was in Bacchus's 35  
 company of home, kept close on his heels and would have taken him  
 alive; but one of the Thracian horsemen fell upon him and cut off his  
 arm at the shoulder, so Gorgias escaped safe to Marissa. A long fight 36  
 Ebedi's company had off it, and were full weary, when Judas called upon  
 the Lord to succour them and lead them onwards, battle-by-battle 37  
 battle-very rolling in his own language; and so he put Gorgias' army to  
 the rout.

And now, recalling his men from the pursuit, he made his way to the 38  
 city of Adullam; the week had gone round, and here, duly cleansed from  
 defilement, they kept the sabbath. Next day, with Judas at their head, 39  
 they went back to recover the bodies of the slain, for burial among their  
 own folk in their fathers' graves: and what found they? Each of the 40  
 slain was wearing, under his shirt, some token carried away from the  
 false gods of Judaea. Here was defiance of the Jewish law, and conse-

<sup>1</sup> 'Idumea' is probably a copyist's error for 'Judaea'; the context seems to indicate that this engagement was fought in the Palestinian country.

<sup>2</sup> 'It was but a number of'; literally, 'and he marched out with,' but what Gorgias actually is should be Gorgias, but more commendable that Judas is referred to.

a declared it was the cause of their undoing; none but praised the Lord for  
 his just retribution, that had brought hidden things to light; and as they  
 fell to prayer, pleading that the sin might go unremembered. Judas him-  
 self, their gallant commander, gave public warning to his men, of flesh  
 they should evermore keep clean, with the fate of these transgressors;  
 made their eyes. Then he would have contributions made, a sum of  
 twelve thousand silver pieces he levied, and sent it to Jerusalem, to have  
 sacrifices made there for the guilt of their dead companions. What use this  
 will these and pious? Here was a man kept the resurrection ever in mind;  
 he had done bravely and faithfully indeed, to pray for the dead, if there  
 might sin no more, that ones were killed? And these had made a godly  
 end; could he doubt, a rich recompense awaited them? A holy and  
 wholesome thought it is to pray for the dead, for their guilt's undoing.

## CHAPTER 13

IT was in the hundred and forty-ninth year now came to Judas that  
 Antiochus Eupator was marching on Judaea in great force. Lysias was  
 at his side, that was lord protector and managed the affairs of the realm,  
 and with him were a hundred and ten thousand foot, five thousand horse,  
 twenty-two elephants, and three hundred mythrid chariots. Manasses,  
 too, must be of their company, and ever it was treacherous advice he  
 gave to Antiochus; not that he cared for his country's safety, but he had  
 designs upon the high priesthood still. And hapless the King of all  
 things brought this guilty wretch into ill favour with his master Antiochus,  
 who (upon Lysias' stirring, here was the true source of all their mis-  
 adventures) would have him apprehended and put to death according  
 to the custom of the place where they were quartered. There is here a  
 tower fifty cubits in height, rising steep above a heap of ashes that sur-  
 rounds it; from its walls the ashes of traitors is thrust forward to his  
 death by the common impulse of the bystanders. This, then, was the  
 doom of Manasses; by this law the law-breaker met his end, and lay  
 there unburied. A fitting reward, this, for one that had done so many  
 outrages upon God's altar; fire of it and ashes of it are sowed, and it was  
 by ashes Manasses went to his death.

Yet still the King pressed forward on his mad career, as if he would  
 prove himself a worse enemy of Jewry than his father; and Judaea, when  
 the news came to him, bade the people entreat God night and day he  
 would come to their rescue, so ever he was wont hitherto. Here was  
 great peril, they should be deprived as one blow of law, of country, and  
 of sanctuary; would he allow blaspheming Gentiles to lead it again over

his people, that had but now won a little breathing-space? Hurried the 11  
Lord they did, and with one accord, for his mercy, wept they and fasted,  
and kept on their knees for three days together. Then Judas gave them  
the word to arm, and himself called the elders to a council; his plan was, 11  
he told them, to march out and engage the king before he could reach  
Judaea and encompass the city, and the issue of it he would leave to the  
Lord's good pleasure. So, committing all to God, the world's enemy, 14  
and bidding his men fight bravely, even to the death, for law, temple,  
city, country and kinsmen, he pitched his camp at Madba. The watch- 11  
word he gave them was, Victory lies with God; and now, choosing out the  
best of his fighting men, he made a night attack upon the royal quarters.  
Four thousand men they slew in the camp, and the greatest of all the  
elephants, with the crew that rode him, and so went back in triumph, 14  
leaving the camp all confusion and dismay.

After this daybreak victory, won under God's protection, the king had 11  
more courage of Jewish valour, and set about to reduce the strongholds  
by policy. And first he would deliver an attack upon Bethsura, a fortress 11  
of the Jews, but ever he was thrown back and repulsed with great loss, so  
well did Judas supply the garrison with all they needed. There was one 11  
Rhodocus in the Jewish army that betrayed secrets to the enemy, but,  
upon enquiry made, he was apprehended and put under arrest; so the 11  
king was fain to parley with the defenders of Bethsura, and, upon agreed  
terms, the siege of it was raised. Thus did he try conclusions with 11  
Judas, and had the worst of it; now came to him besides that Philip,  
whom he had left in charge at Antioch, was levying revolt against him.  
So, in great consternation of mind, he must needs throw himself on the  
mercy of the Jews, submitting under such to the just terms they imposed  
on him. In token of this reconciliation, he offered sacrifice, paying the  
temple much reverence and offering gifts there; as for Machabeus, 14  
the king made a friend of him, and appointed him both governor and  
commander of all the territory from Ptolemais to the Gertennes. When 11  
he reached Ptolemais, he found the citizens much incensed over this  
treaty made, and angrily avowing the terms of it would never be kept  
until at last Lyfias was to go up to an open stage, and give his reasons; 11  
whereby he gained the indignation of the people, and so returned to  
Antioch. Such was the king's march upon Judaea, and such his home-  
coming.

## CHAPTER 14

**T**HREE years later, came tidings to Judas and his company that Demetrios, son of Seleucus, was on the throne. This Demetrios, with a body of mercenary followers and with ships to support him, had landed at Tripolis, in a part of the country well suited to his purpose, and had wrested the whole kingdom from Antiochus, and from Lyfias his general.

- 1 Now came we to one Alcimus, that had been high priest formerly, but  
had wilfully incurred defilement in the days when Sele began conversing  
with the Gentiles.<sup>1</sup> Little hope was left him, he should live to present  
4 himself at the altar again; and now he had recourse to king Demetrius,  
in the hundred and fiftieth year. He came with gifts, a gold crown and  
a palm branch, and wreaths that had been better employed in the service  
6 of the temple.<sup>2</sup> No word said he on the first day of his arriving, but ere  
long opportunity was given him of carrying out his insidious design.  
He was called into concert by Demetrius himself, and asked what re-  
sources the Jews had, or what purposes in view, that gave them such  
8 confidence. And this was his answer: It is the faction of the Hasidæans,  
with Judas Maccabæus at their head, that will ever be fighting the flames  
1 of war, and moving revolt, and destroying the peace of the realm. Thou  
canst have a man robbed of his high priesthood, his rightful inheritance.  
3 And the cause of my coming is, first, the loyalty I have to the king's own  
interest, but not less, the love of my own fellow-countrymen; by the false  
5 aims of a faction the whole of our race is brought into utter misery. Do  
but wisely thyself, my lord king, that all is as I have said, and then, with  
7 that kindness the world knows so well, take order concerning them. No  
peace the consciences may have, while Judas lives.  
11 Such was the opinion he gave, and the courtiers, that had little love  
12 for Judas, fell to egging Demetrius on; he, with all haste, despatched  
one of his generals to Judæa, Nicanor, that was in command of the  
13 elephants. His orders were, to take Judas alive, to dispossess his company,  
14 and of our glorious temple to make Alcimus high priest. The Gentiles  
where Judas had chased out of the country looked, now, to Nicanor's  
side, confident that the miserable ruin of the Jews would be the founda-  
tion of their own prosperity. As for the Jews, when they heard Nicanor  
was on the march, with all this rabble of alien Sele, they came forth on

<sup>1</sup> Begun conversing; the Greek verb has, 'began to reason.'

<sup>2</sup> That had been better employed in the service of the temple; literally, 'that ceased or failed to be in the service of the temple.' The crown of the Greeks and is probably 'such as were commonly used in the service of the temple.'

their hands and betook themselves to prayer. Was it not God's appointment, his people he should evermore prosper? Was he not wont to pay-  
 ment them with signal marks of his favour? And now orders came to them <sup>14</sup>  
 from their leader; they must be on the march. Their marching-place was  
 a fortress called Demas, to which Simon, Judas' brother, had with-  
 drawn after a brush with the enemy, who defeated him by the sudden-  
 ness of their advance.<sup>1</sup>

But Nicanor had heard much about the valour of Judas' men, and how <sup>15</sup>  
 nobly they fought in their country's quarrel; no wonder if he shrunk from  
 the arbitrament of the sword, and went abroad to meet them, Ptolemaeus, <sup>16</sup>  
 Theodotus and Matthias, with an offer of terms. After a deal of negotia-  
 tion, Judas referred the matter to the general voice, and all were agreed  
 upon accepting the offer of friendship. So the day was fixed for a secret <sup>17</sup>  
 conference to be held between them; themes of honour were brought  
 out and set ready, and you may be sure Judas had armed men posted in <sup>18</sup>  
 waiting, to forestall any sudden treachery on the enemy's part; but their  
 parleys ended happily enough. Nicanor was now lodged in Jerusalem, <sup>19</sup>  
 and did there no manner of harm, all the rubble he had brought with him  
 were dispersed to their homes. Towards Judas he showed unaffected <sup>20</sup>  
 friendship, such a liking he had taken for the man; ay, and encouraged <sup>21</sup>  
 him to take a wife and beget children; so Judas married, and took his  
 ease, and ever he lived on close terms with Nicanor.

And what of Antioch? Little it liked him to see all this good-will <sup>22</sup>  
 between the two of them, and their treaty-making; so Demetrius he  
 betook him, and charged Nicanor with disaffection; was he not purposing <sup>23</sup>  
 to hand over his command to Judas, a traitor against the realm? The <sup>24</sup>  
 accusation, that threw Demetrius into a great raking of fury; he wrote  
 to Nicanor, he was very ill content with the peace made, and would have  
 Machabeus sent to Antioch in chains without more ado. Here was <sup>25</sup>  
 Nicanor left in great confusion of mind; it went against the grain with  
 him to cancel the treaty with Judas, that had nothing wronged him, yet <sup>26</sup>  
 run counter to the king's will he might not. So he began looking for an  
 opportunity of carrying out his orders; and Machabeus, remarking that  
 a commotion had sprung up, and their meetings were less courteous than  
 hitherto, made sure this behaviour of his boded no good. Whereupon he  
 gathered some of his company, and went into conference.

So Nicanor found himself quite outwitted; and he must needs make <sup>27</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Verses 16, 17. There is perhaps some truth here in the manuscript; the Greek  
 text reads literally, 'And the leader having commanded it, he (Judas) immediately  
 moved his camp from there (from where?), and made contact with them (with  
 whom?) at the village of Laisan. But Simon, the brother of Judas, had suggested  
 Nicanor; but shortly, having come to grief through the sudden silence of the  
 camp.'

his way into the high and holy precincts of the temple, where even then  
the priests were offering their accustomed sacrifice, Judas, he said, must  
be handed over to him; and when they, upon oath, denied all knowledge  
of his hiding-place, what did Nicanor? He pointed to the temple, and  
swore that if Judas were not handed over to him in chains he would run  
yonder masonry to the ground, demolish the altar, and consecrate its  
precincts anew to Baalim. With that, he left them and the priests,  
lifting up their hands to heaven, called upon the God that was over the  
champion of their race, with such prayer as this: Lord of all, that seed  
of thy servants hast none, thy will it was to have thy dwelling-place  
among us! Holy thou art, and of all holy things the most; thy house,  
that was so lately deemed of us defilement, keep thou for ever undefiled.  
It was this Nicanor that received information against one of the slaves  
at Jerusalem, named Baruch, a true patriot and a man of good courage; for  
the love he bore it, men called him the father of the Jewish people. Long  
time this man had held to his resolve of keeping aloof from the Greeks,  
ready to put life and limb in jeopardy, so he might persevere. And now,  
as if to give public proof of hatred towards the Jews, Nicanor sent five  
hundred men to take him alive; shrewder blow was none he could deal  
them, than to beguile such a man as this. And when this great company  
set about to force an entry into his dwelling, beating down the door  
and cutting out the timbers, cut off from all escape, what did Baruch?  
He thrust sword into his own body, counting it better to die honourably  
than to fall into the hands of sinners, and suffer savage mockery of a  
free-born man.<sup>2</sup> The heavy blow missed its aim, and now, with a rabble  
of men pouring in through the door he made gallantly for the outer wall,  
and never hesitated to cast himself down, there in the heart of the crowd.  
Too may be sure they made room for his coming, and he fell on the very  
point of his neck; yet, breathing still, he rose to his feet undaunted;  
blood streaming from his mortal wounds, he made his way through the  
press of men, till he stood on a sheer rock above them. And there, for  
now he had no blood left in him, he hid hold of his own nostrils, and  
with both hands cast them into the crowd beneath, calling upon the Lord,  
giver of life and breath, to restore these same to his body; and so died.

<sup>2</sup> Some have attributed this action of Baruch to a special inspiration; but we are  
willing to suppose he was not conscious of a divine law against self-murder, and  
to admire his courage accordingly.



## CHAPTER 15

WHEN Nicanor was told, Judas was in the Samaritan country, he would have pressed home the attack against him, there and then, on the sabbath day. But the Jews gainsaid him; for there were Jews that fought, unwillingly enough, under his leaders. What, said they, wouldst thou fight beast-fashions, without mercy? This holy day respect thou needs must, in his honour that is God all-seeing. Why, where is he then, said the impious wretch, this God who would have sabbath kept? In the heavens? In heavens he is, sure enough, they answered, the living Lord our master, that gave orders the seventh day should be observed. So he is, said he, and I am your master on earth, and my orders are, To arms, and dispatch the King's business! Yet carry out his design they would not.

Such an empty braggar was this Nicanor, he thought to make a single victory of it, over all the Jews as yet; Machabæus on his side kept ever his confidence, yet with the sure hope, God would bring him aid. And for his men he had the same encouragement; for then never he daunted by the onslaught of the heathen, but rather bethink them of heaven's wonders in time past, and look to God Omnipotent for victory. Of the law and the prophets he spoke to them, and reminded them of their old battles, all all were eager for the fight; nor was it enough to arouse their ardour; he showed them, too, how treacherous the heathen had proved, and how fickle. Thus it was his care to arm them, not with shield or spear for their defence, but with excellent words of good cheer.

A dream of his he told them, most worthy of credence, that brought comfort to one and all. And what saw he? Onias, that had once been high priest, appeared to him; an excellent good man this, modest of mien, courteous, well-spoken, and from his boyhood schooled in all the virtues. With hands outstretched, he stood there praying for the Jewish folk. Then he was ware of another, a man of great age and reverence, nothing is about him but was most worshipful; who this might be, Onias told him is fortetide: Here is one that loves our brethren, the people of Israel, well; one that for Israel and for every man of the holy city prays much; God's prophet Jeremias. And with that, Jeremias reached forward to Judas, and gave him a golden sword; This holy sword take thou, he said, God's is gift; this wielding, all the enemies of my people Israel thou shalt lay low.

A most noble language, and one very apt to raise the estimation of his followers, and to stiffen their courage. No wonder if they resolved they would put it to the touch, and manfully engage the enemy; victory should decide all. Was not the holy city, was not the temple itself in jeopardy? For wives and children, for brethren and kindred, their concern was a

11 less; of the perils they dreaded, profanation of the temple was first and  
12 a foremost. And what of those who were left in the camp? No content  
13 in safety they felt for those others that were going into battle. Now was  
14 the hour of deciding; the enemy was at the gates, drawn up in full array;  
15 here were the elephants, here was the cavalry, posted at points of van-  
16 tage. Judas, when he saw the number of his assailants, how manifold  
17 were their appointments, how fierce the temper of the brutes, was fain  
18 to lift hands heavenward, and to the Lord make his appeal: the Lord,  
19 that is weakness in his deluge, and at his own pleasure crowns right, not  
20 might, with victory. And this was the manner of his praying: Lord, in  
21 the days of Ezechias thou didst send thy angel, and take toll of a hundred  
22 and eighty-five thousand in the camp of Sennacherib! Ruler of heavens,  
23 send friendly angel of thine this day escort us, dread and dismay let thy  
24 outstretched hand inspire, to the confusion of yonder blasphemers that  
25 levy war on thy holy people! And so he brought his prayer to an end.

26 By this, Nicanor's army was coming forward to the attack, with blow-  
27 ing of trumpets and with songs of battle. But Judas and his company  
28 went to meet them calling still upon God for his succour: and ever while  
29 hand fought, heart prayed. Such joy had they of God's present assistance,  
30 they cut down a full thirty-five thousand of the enemy: when they let  
31 be, and returned in triumph from the pursuit, news greeted them  
32 Nicanor himself had arisen for the fight, and lay there dead. What a cry  
33 was then raised, what a roar, what hymns they sang, in the speech of their  
34 own country, to God Omnipotent!

35 And Judas? Not for nothing had he devoted body and soul, this long  
36 while, to the service of his fellow countrymen! Nicanor's head, and one  
37 of his arms cut off from the shoulder downwards, he bade them carry to  
38 Jerusalem: and there he called the tribesmen together, ranged the priests  
39 about the altar, and sent his summons to the brethren that perished  
40 in the citadel. Head and hand he showed them of the godless Nicanor, the  
41 head that was smitten out so honorably against the holy temple of the  
42 Almighty, bidding them cut the blaspheming tongue in pieces and cast  
43 it to the birds, and the rest hand to the temple's fire. None but praised  
44 the Lord of heaven at the sight! Blowed by the Lord, they cried, that has  
45 kept his house undefiled still! As for Nicanor's head, Judas hung it at  
46 the top of the citadel, to be a clear and evident token, how God gives  
47 aid. And all with one consent made a decree, never should that day pass  
48 unobserved; they would keep holiday on the thirteenth of the Syrian  
49 month Adar, which is the eve of Mardocheus' feast.<sup>1</sup>

50 Such was the history of Nicanor; and since that time the day has been  
51 in Jewish possession. Hence, then, I will make an end of writing: if it

<sup>1</sup> See Est. 9.17 and 18.

has been done workmanly, and in Hirschman's fashion, none better pleased than I; if it is of little merit, I must be honoured once the less.<sup>1</sup> Nothing but wine to take, nothing but water, thy health forbids; very as thy drinking,<sup>2</sup> and then shall find content. So it is with reading; if the book be too nicely polished at every point, it grows wearisome. So here we will have done with it.

<sup>1</sup> 'I must be honoured once the less' according to the Greek text, 'I have done as well as I could.' Divine inspiration is something superadded to, not a substitute for, human labour and human self-criticism.

<sup>2</sup> For 'very thy drinking' the Greek text has 'wine both together'; and the sense of the sentence is a (somewhat obscure) recommendation of style.

## THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Translated from the Latin text of the Pontifical Biblical Institute

### PSALM 1

**B**lessed is the man who does not guide his steps by ill counsel, or turn aside  
1 *Before sinners walk, or, where successful souls gather, sit down to rest: the man*  
2 *whose heart is set on the law of the Lord, on that law, day and night, his thoughts*  
3 *will dwell. He stands firm as a tree planted by running water, ready to yield its*  
4 *fruit when the season comes, nor a leaf sheds all that he does will prosper. Nor*  
5 *will, nor with the wicked; the wicked are like chaff the wind sweeps away. For*  
6 *for the wicked, when judgment comes, to rest up and gloat their doom; sinners*  
7 *will have no part in the reunion of the just. Then walk, the just, under the Lord's*  
8 *protection, the path of the wicked, how easy is it left to sight!*

### PSALM 2

**W**hat noise this tumult among the nations! Why do the peoples cherish  
1 *vain dreams? See how the kings of the earth raised in anger, how in vain*  
2 *their nations rose, against the Lord, and against the King he has anointed,*  
3  *crying, Let us break away from their bondage, rid ourselves of the yoke! He who*  
4 *sits enthroned in heaven is laughing at their threats, the Lord makes light of them; and*  
5 *at last, in his displeasure, he will speak out, his anger sparkling flames. Then, in*  
6 *angry tones, my anointed, I will anoint a king of my own choice.*  
7  *Mine to proclaim the Lord's edicts how he told me, Then set my son, I have*  
8  *forgotten none this day. All they will of me, and those that have the nations for*  
9  *my patrimony, the very ends of the world for my domain. Those shall lord them*  
10  *as the sheep with a crook of iron, break them in pieces like earthenware. Princes,*  
11  *arise morning from your lairs, you that rule the world. Tremble, and serve the*  
12  *Lord, rejoicing in his presence, but with awe in your hearts. Kiss the rod, do not*  
13  *brow beat him, and go away from the sure path. When the fire of his vengeance*  
14  *blazes out suddenly, happy are they who find their refuge in him.*

### PSALM 3

(A psalm David wrote, when he fled before his son Absalom.)

**S**ing how they surround me, Lord, my adversaries, how many rise up in arms  
1 *Against me, everywhere voices menacing me, like a flood dashed upon this rock.*  
2  *Yet, Lord, thou art the shield that covers me, thou art the rock that keeps me*  
3  *from grief. I have trusted my soul to the Lord, and my voice declares his mercies*  
4  *unnumbered, and there shall be no lying. Safe is God's hand I lay down, and sleep,*  
5  *and have no dread; and now, through thousands of the people set upon me from*  
6  *every side, I will not be afraid of them. Beside thyself, Lord my God, now can*  
7  *I come to mine my enemies on the flank, there to break the flags of sinners. From*  
8  *the Lord all deliverance comes; let thy meditation, Lord, rest upon thy people.*

## PSALM 4

(To the choir-masters. On stringed instruments. A psalm. Of David.)

**W**HEN I call on thy name, O God, and great redress will be  
 mine if trouble, thou hast brought me relief; have pity on me now, and hear  
 my prayer. Great ones of the world, will your hearts always be hardened, and you  
 never come sitting over hearts on shadows, following a lie? To the soul he lives,  
 he sees the Lord above mountains strong; whenever I call on his name, the Lord  
 will hear me. Tremble, and do no more vain thoughts, as you lie awake, in the  
 silence of your hearts. Offer sacrifices with due observance, and put your trust  
 in the Lord. There are many that longish for a sight of better things; do this,  
 then, Lord, show us the number of thy loving. Never did cloth harvests of corn  
 and wine bring gladness like the gladness thou puttest into my heart. When I  
 lie down, sleep comes, and with sleep tranquillity; what need, Lord, of night  
 dread or being me troubled?

## PSALM 5

(To the choir-masters. On the flute. A psalm. Of David.)

**L**ORD, hear to my plea, let me not sigh in mine; pay heed to my cry of petition,  
 Lord King, my God. To thee, Lord, my prayers go up, early in the dawn  
 early in the morning I lay my petitions before thee and watch thy pleasure. No  
 evil thing claims thy divine name; with thee baseness cannot dwell; nor rebel-  
 lion hold us ground at thy coming. Thou hatest the wrongdoing, and with being  
 the far to destruction; blood-thirsty and treacherous man the Lord holds in  
 abhorrence. I, then, encompassed by thy mercy, will be as equal to thy house,  
 and in remembrance of thee love shall follow thy sanctuary.

Lord, do thou lead me with faithful care; show thou the path, while I wait  
 thou art by me. In their speech no truth can be found; their hearts are all  
 treachery, their mouths gaping void; flattery is ever on their lips. Thy is  
 courage, O God! Chase them of their hearts, cast them out in all their wickedness;  
 have they not defied thee? But for all these who trust in thee there is joy and  
 everlasting triumph welcome protection they have from thee, true lovers of thy  
 name. Lord, thou givest thy brethren to the poor; thou dost show thy loving-  
 kindness about us like a shield.

## PSALM 6

(To the choir-masters. On stringed instruments. Over the organ.  
A psalm. Of David.)

**L**ORD, when thou dost require me, let it not be in anger; when thou dost  
 rebuke me, let it not be in displeasure. Lord, pity me; I have no strength left;  
 Lord, heal me; my limbs tremble; my spirits are altogether broken; Lord, with  
 thee never be content? Look, turn back and grant a wretched soul relief; as  
 thou art ever merciful, save me. When death comes, there is no more comfort-  
 ing thee; none can praise thee in the tomb. I am spent with sighing, every night  
 I lie weeping on my bed, till the tears drain my pillow. Grief has dimmed  
 my eyes, faded their heart now; so many are the adversaries that surround me.  
 Depart from me, all you that traffic in iniquity; the Lord has heard my cry of  
 distress. O prayer divinely heard, O tears divinely granted! All my enemies  
 will be shocked and terrified; when shock, all in a moment, and yet is done.

## PSALM 7

(A lament of David's, which he sang to the Lord because of Goliath, the Goliathite.)

1 **O** LORD my God, my confidence is in thee; away are from all my persecutors,  
 2 and great the deliverance: must I tell a helpless prey to the lion, he tears at  
 3 pieces, with none to bring me aid? O LORD my God, if I now have been at fault,  
 4 if these hands are stained with guilt: if I have been a false friend, and not sworn  
 5 against mine enemies that wronged me, then indeed let mine enemy reproach me  
 6 with his relentless pursuit, trample me to earth, and level my spirit with the dust!  
 7 Lord, rise up in the anger, contrived the malice of my enemies, break myself,  
 8 O LORD my God, in defence of the laws thou thyself hast given us. All the nations  
 9 will gather about thee, it shall with voice hark to thy throne and rule them: the  
 10 Lord ruling the nations: Give us rest now, Lord, to my neighbours, to all the  
 11 innocency of my heart. Surely thou wilt put an end to the wrong-doing of the  
 12 wicked, and prosper the innocent; no thought or desire of ours can escape the  
 13 scrutiny of thy Divine justice. From the Lord, refuge of true hearts, my pro-  
 14 tection comes. God judges ever true, day by day his indignation awakes up  
 15 as if they do not repent, his sword will flash brightly; he has bent and aimed his bow,  
 16 surely are the weapons he is preparing for them; he has barbed his arrows with  
 17 fire. Here was a heart prepared with malice, that received only spite, and gave  
 18 him only evil to do himself: How was our who sing a psalm and walk in sleep, and tell him  
 19 of a man of his own making? All his spirit will revolve us, toward, all his substance will  
 20 fall on his own head. I will ever thank the Lord for his just distribution, singing  
 21 praise to the name of the Lord, the most High.

## PSALM 8

(To the chief-music. To the mood of the song, The Wine-psalm.)

A psalm. Of David.)

1 **O** LORD, our Master, how the majesty of thy name fills all the earth! Thy  
 2 greatness is high above heaven's vault. Thou hast made the fow of children,  
 3 of infants as the brutes, world wide praise, so confused thy enemies, so release  
 4 captivities and avenged wrongs. I look up at thine heavens of skies, the work  
 5 of thy hands, at the moon and the stars, which thou hast set in their places; what  
 6 is man that thou shouldst remember him? What is Adam's breed, that it should  
 7 claim thy care? Thou hast placed him only a little below the angels, crowning  
 8 him with glory and honour, and bidding him rule over the works of thy hands.  
 9 Thou hast put them all under his dominion, the sheep and the cattle, and the  
 10 wild beasts besides; the birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea, that tread by the  
 11 of each path. O LORD, our Master, how the majesty of thy name fills all the earth!

## PSALM 9

(To the chief-music. To the mood of the song, Hail, Labyrinth.)

A psalm. Of David.)

1 **L**ORD, I give thee all the thoughts of my heart, recounting thy wonderful doings;  
 2 lighted and glorified in thee, I will sing praise to thy name, O God most  
 3 high. See how my enemies turn back, how they flee and walk away in the night

<sup>1</sup> Some of the Vulgate words used in these inter-translations are of quite ordinary significance; these, in the new version of the Psalter, we translate straightforwardly.

of death! Those have given me sadness and maligned my name; then all those  
 see the shame, seeing justice done. Those have chartered the heavens in their  
 scorn; those have brought the wicked to nothing, blotting out their name for all  
 time. Hope is the sinner's power, doomed to vanishing; only the memory of  
 those has died with the fall of their char. But the Lord abides for ever on the  
 throne of judgment he has prepared, will judge the world rightly, will punish  
 every man people in due. The Lord is a stronghold to the oppressed, a stronghold  
 in time of need. Those who acknowledge the name, Lord, can trust them; never  
 was man forsaken that had recourse to him.

Sing, then, to the Lord, who dwells in Zion, tell the Churches of his great deeds  
 how he, the avenger of blood, cares for the afflicted, does not forget them when  
 they cry to him. Have pity on me, Lord, look upon all that I suffer in my mortal  
 body, show who shall never rescue me from the gate of death, so protect thy  
 praise in the gate of the living Zion, so merit in thy saving power. The heathen  
 have been caught in their own deadly devices; their feet have been trapped in the  
 very nets they had laid, now it will be seen how the Lord defends the right, how  
 the wicked deserve their own reaching. To the place of death the wicked must  
 come, heathen that have no thought of God. He does not forget the helpless  
 their time will come, the painless of the afflicted will not go for nothing. Surely  
 thyself, Lord, be not fainter strength perish, let the heathen stand upon their  
 evil before thee: let the heathen, too, feel the terror, and learn they are but men.

Lord, why dost thou sleep by night? In days of affliction, why dost thou make us  
 no sign? The heart of the oppressed hath writhed them, so triumphant is the ill  
 schemer that has trapped them: so proud of his wicked and achieved, still he  
 rebelling men, blaspheming and despising the Lord. God there is none to punish  
 him, the sinner thinks in his pride, and makes that thought his rule: still, as he  
 goes on perverting, he betrays the law from his mind, and makes light of his  
 covenant. Butless rise, he thinks, cannot shake his unspeakable existence. His  
 words mockers mock earnest, and mockery, and death, his tongue is a carbuncle  
 of deception and mischief. Ambushed he lies at the village gate, so will murder  
 the man who never wronged him: his eyes are continually on his prey like a lion  
 in its lair, he watches from his hiding-place, or harpises his delinquents like, safe  
 in the net. So he catches him in the crib, much there howling and weeping, till  
 the prey falls to his own. Why not he thinks to himself, God has forgotten  
 I: now is God will raise his face away, and see nothing.

O Lord God, hear thyself, let up thy hand do not forget the helpless. Why  
 is the sinner allowed to defy God, to think he will never exact punishment? But  
 is it such that were to, then have eyes for misery and sinners, and will save them  
 and thy keeping. The dominion are set on us now has shown to thee only the  
 oppressor looks for justice. Break down the power of the wicked oppressor, punish  
 his ill-doing, and let him be seen no more. The Lord will reign for ever painless, if  
 while you, the heathen, will vanish from the land he loves. The sight of the ill  
 oppressor has found weakness; those will lead them and bring courage to their  
 hearts, will give wisdom to the fatherless and the persecuted; mortal men shall  
 make himself feared no longer.

## PSALM 10

(To the choir-masters. Of David.)

MY trust is in the Lord, how is it that you say to your friend, Perhaps, like a  
 lightning, sparrow, so the left-side? Perhaps the nations have wronged their  
 laws, have arrows ready in the quiver, to shoot from their hiding-places at all

- 4 understanding heart! They left God's debt all day under badly worn boots, even,  
 for that last night?  
 5 Is not the Lord in his holy shrine, the same Lord whose throne is in heaven,  
 whose eye watches, whose glance can appraise, the deeds of men? How long he  
 waits, he waits even here, and the future of wrong-doing are his enemies.  
 6 Probably his weapons rule down upon the offenders, burning coals, and flames,  
 power, and smothering wind, such is the drought he brews for them. The Lord is  
 just, and will not let the deeds he loves come but upright men shall enjoy his  
 presence.

## PSALM 11

(To the choir-masters. Over the octave. A psalm. Of David.)

- 1 **L**ook, come to my rescue, pity is dead, in a hard world, your fingers have grown  
 2 long. How but challenge empty boats of speech with his righteous enemy,  
 3 when false horns and treacherous lips. Those treacherous lips, that smile with  
 4 high-sounding phrases, Lord, cut the words of them? Why men imagine, they  
 5 say, we can do great things, our light and good friends to us, we even so mean.  
 6 Now, says the Lord, I will break myself, on behalf of the righteous who get so it  
 7 good, of the poor who cry out so bitterly. I will visit them the violence they long  
 8 for. The enemies of the Lord are their death, but since that is turned to the  
 9 justice, the justice of earth goes, even those refined. Yes, Lord, those with words  
 10 say so, and bury us even safe from those evil days.  
 11 But later the wicked come and go all around us, how they rise to greatness  
 this last hour of men.

## PSALM 12

(To the choir-masters. A psalm. Of David.)

- 1 **L**ook, now I still go all unremembered, when thy look will be turned away  
 2 from me? Each day brings a fresh load of care, each misery to my heavy heart  
 3 I lie over the spot of my sinners! Look upon me, O Lord my God, and turn  
 4 I to me give light to those eyes, before they close in death: do not let my enemies  
 5 claim the victory, my persecutors triumph over me still! I saw myself on the  
 6 verge, now may this last hour of relief be granted, say to praise of the Lord,  
 my liberation.

## PSALM 13

(To the choir-masters. Of David.)

- 1 **T**here is no God above us, is the first thought of wicked hearts, warped  
 2 nature everywhere and hard love! There have sinners come among them,  
 3 The Lord looks down from heaven at the race of men, at that one word that reflects,  
 4 and makes God sit him. But we, all have turned the mark and rebuffed again  
 5 him an innocent man is comfort to be found. What, can they have nothing, all  
 6 those traffickers in iniquity, who feed themselves on the people of sin, as  
 7 if it were bread for their eating, and water inside the Lord's hand! What  
 8 a wonder of their constant faith, when the Lord takes his part of the innocent! Truly  
 9 you thought to reject the righteousness, the Lord is his refuge! Oh, that it might  
 10 dawn over him, Israel's deliverance! Day of gloom for Jacob, day of Israel's  
 triumph, when the Lord returns the fortunes of his own people.



## PSALM 14

(A psalm. Of David.)

**W**HAT is it, Lord, that will make his bones in the infernal, rest to the moon-  
 rain miserably necessary? Ourselves guide his steps without track, and give  
 to all their day, but whose heart is all honest purposes, who offers no wickedness  
 word, never defrauds a friend, or slanders a neighbor. He seems the reproach,  
 keeping his conscience the judge as true God, and is none, young what may, in his  
 pledged word, leads without guile, and takes no heed to condemn the innocent.  
 His vote no lives will stand firm for ever.

## PSALM 15

(A psalm. Of David.)

**W**HAT is it, Lord, I put my trust in thee. The Lord, whom I own as my  
 God, makes that his faith is all my good. There are faithful souls in this land  
 of his, without delight he gives me in their companionship. What do they do  
 not lay up their store of mercy, that break themselves in alien pain? Not with  
 thee will I pour out the blood of sacrifice; I will not take forbidden women as my  
 lips. No, it is in the Lord I claim for my price, the Lord who fills my cup above,  
 and so when, with many thy intentions are met. Forgive it when there more is my  
 blessing welcome the Lord's choice!

Blended be the Lord, who speaks me, has been the night, my latest thoughts  
 declare me. Always I can keep the Lord within sight, always be in at day night  
 heart, to make me stand firm. Glad and merry am I, heart and soul of me; my  
 body, too, shall rest in confidence, that they will not leave my soul in the place of  
 death, to alien thy faithful servants to our acceptance. Those who show mercy to  
 my of life, make me full of gladness in thy presence, at thy right hand are delights  
 that will endure for ever.

## PSALM 16

(A psalm. Of David.)

**I**OW, to my last complaint give me; do not spare my cry the old. Lament this  
 Lament of mine that are no wickedness lips that make it. As thy judgments  
 and I claim reward, saving thy servants. With thee trust my heart, showing none  
 in the darkness of rest me as of thy love, there will find no wickedness in me. Never  
 have these lips been led away by man's evil examples, still to thy law's command  
 thy sayings keep me true; still in thy paths my steps were kindly planned, my  
 feet did not stumble.

And now I cry to thee, the God who ever loves me, turn thy ear towards me,  
 and listen to my plea. Thy mercy, thy signal mercy, shall come over sought  
 sanctuary at thy right hand to mine. Prevent me as thou wouldst the apple of thy  
 eye, and like me under the shadow of thy wings, save from the evil-doers who  
 wrong me.

Has been my enemies about about me mercilessly, their hearts shut to pity, as  
 heart on their lips? Even now their wickedly tread about as on me, as they wish to  
 their opportunity to bring me down: better had a lion caught me, eager for its  
 prey, a young lion that waits hidden in its lair.

Break thyself, Lord; break him and shatter him to the ground; burn thy  
 sword, and save me from the evil-doer, save thy hand, to rescue me from the

bands of mortal men! Mortal men indeed, that have all their powers bent on making where destruction does satisfy with insurance from the sword, so that their children, too, live in abundance, and leave riches for new heirs to enjoy. As for me, I will come with upright heart into thy presence, and when thy glory dawns, I shall be well content.

## PSALM 17

(To the chief-singer. Of David, the servant of the Lord. He addressed to the Lord the words of this song, on the day when God delivered him from the hand of Saul, and from the hands of all his enemies; as follows.)

1 **S**ometimes I am terrified, Lord, my only defender. The Lord is my rock-fortress, my stronghold, my refuge, to God, my hiding-place, I give the subject he is my boast, my weapon of deliverance, my refuge. Praised be the Lord! When I awake to his name, I am woken from my slumber. All about me raged the waves of death, I deep dived the passion tide, so death may the great God caught me in its coils. 2 deadly snares had trapped my feet. One cry to the Lord, in my affliction, one word of supplication to my God, and he, from his sanctuary, listened to my voice, the complaints I made before him found a hearing.

3 Earth's deeps were shivered and shuddered, the very foundations of the hills quaked and quaked at his anger; as the fiery comets that blazed from his mouth and as terrible, blinding coals to flame. He bade heaven, moon, and sun come down to earth, as with a sign about in his hand, he came, earth's-movement, borne up on the wings of the wind, shrouded in darkness, wrapped with black curtains and deep in mist. Then, while coals were kindled at the brightness as he came, the Lord 5 saw his thunder from heavens, the most high in his voice he heard. How they trembled when he raised down his arrows on them, how they fled in confusion before the volleys of his lightning! The sea's bed came to light, the very foundations of the world were laid bare, when deep didst threaten them, Lord, when 7 thou didst bid them quake down with the breath of thy anger. Then he reached down to them heaven, caught hold of me, rescued me from that flood, saved me from triumph-melancholy, from the enemies that held me in their power. Eight days, as when they threatened me as every word! Yet the Lord stood by me, and brought me out into freedom again; his great love befriended me.

8 So, for my deliverance, the Lord would require me, as he sees me guiltless in my sin, he would make return. Have I not kept true to the Lord's path? Have I not let him ever loyal to my God? No law of his, but I have kept it before my eyes, as 10 and he laid upon me have I refused, even standing in his presence, ever careful to keep myself clear of guile, ever faithful, ever guiltless in sin, the Lord has required me. Lovingly will thou treat those who love thee, with the loyal keep 12 truthly, give of heart the prize of heart, shall find thee, the trusting thou wilt over- 14 reach. To humble folk thou wilt bring deliverance; the proud, with their haughtiness, thou wilt bring down to earth. It is thou, Lord, that keepst the lamp of 16 my hopes well burning; shinnest on the darkness about me, O my God. In thy strength I will engage a host of the enemy, in thy God's strength their defence crumbles.

17 Rock is my God, unshuffled in his dealings; his promises are like steel tested 18 in the day, he is the sure defence of all who trust in him. Who can the Lord be to God? When other refuge can there be, except our God? It is he that abides me with 20 strength, bids me go on my way untroubled. He makes me sure-minded as the stone, and gives me the freedom of the hills; these hands, through him, are skilled 22 as hands, these arms are a match the way down of towers. Thy strong power, Lord,

in my defence, thy right hand supports me; thy tender care sustains me. Though it  
 does, my steps are unaccompanied as I go, my tread never falters. I am everywhere as  
 the enemies I pursue, and where ever hosts till I have made an end of them.  
 I can bow them to their knees, and lead them down to my feet. Those giants are  
 done with a warrior's strength; whenever power challenges me, thou dost subdue  
 broken me, putting my enemies to flight, and throwing all their malice into confusion.  
 Loudly they cry out to the Lord, benefactor of all, but he makes no answer as  
 enemies do. I can make them to perish, like the dust which the wind blows along, as  
 I can trample them down like mire from the streets.

How was it enough, of domestic hosts to rid me; a world should be my realm; as  
 my enemies should pay me homage, quick to the up building. Now where they sit  
 down, the stars come, some shaking out of their stronghold, pale of cheek, to  
 bring before me. Blessed be the living Lord who is my refuge, praised be the God as  
 who delivers me! It is thou, my God, that bringest me justice, that hastenest  
 people to my will, that savest me from the spite of my enemies: so that I am as  
 high above the heads of their enemies, proof against their violence. Then, Lord, as  
 I will give thee thanks in the hearing of all the nations, singing in praise of thy  
 name: glory thy glory given to the King thou hast anointed, to David, and  
 David's line for ever.

## PSALM 18

(To the choir-masters. A psalm. Of David.)

How the skies proclaim God's glory, how the work of heaven boasts his  
 righteousness! Each day shows his power to the sun, each night power on to  
 the moon his greatness of knowledge: all which, as arrows of death that shoot not  
 make itself heard, till their entrance fills every land, till their message reaches  
 the ends of the world. In righteousness, he has made a provision for the sun, which comes  
 out as a bridegroom comes from his bed, and makes his voice great when he  
 goes the world before him. There, at one end of heaven, is its starting-place, and  
 its course reaches to the other; none can escape its burning heat.

The Lord's pathos lies, how it brings the soul back to him; the Lord's unchange-  
 able decrees, how they make the simple known! How plain are the deeds  
 which the Lord makes, the wonders of man's hand; how clear is the commandment  
 the Lord gives, the righteousness of man's deed! How sacred a thing is the  
 fear of the Lord, which is leading for every heart; learning are the words which  
 the Lord makes, and all giving proof of their justice! All these are more  
 precious than gold, than a hoard of pure gold, sweeter than the honey, dropping  
 from my mouth. My chosen I, thy servant, I am, showing thee how I adore thee! And  
 yet, who knows his own frailties? If I have sinned unwittingly, do thou absolve  
 me. Keep me over the own service, be thou guide: so long as this does not end  
 is over me, I will yet be without fault, I will yet be innocent of the great sin. Thine  
 words on my lips, every thought in my heart, what thou wouldst have it be, O Lord,  
 my defender, my deliverer!

## PSALM 19

(To the choir-masters. A psalm. Of David.)

Thou Lord hast in thee in thy time of need, the power of Jacob's God to thy  
 presence! May he send thee aid from his holy place, which over thee, there  
 my sinners stand; may he remember all thy offerings, and find favour in thy sacri-

1 sacrifice. May he grant that what thy heart desires, crown thy hopes with fulfill-  
 2 ments. So may he rejoice at thy deliverance, edited in the name of the Lord our  
 3 God; abundantly may he grant thy prayers. Shall I doubt that this Lord protects  
 4 the king he has anointed, will turn us him from his doorway to heaven? Is not  
 5 his right hand steady to save? His officers talk of heaven and stirring our refuge  
 6 in the name of the Lord our God. Scattered and taken they, while we stand firm  
 7 on our feet. O Lord, save the king, and hear us in the hour when we call upon  
 8 thee.

## PSALM 30

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

9 **W**HEN thy king rejoices, Lord, in thy protection, will may he triumph in  
 10 thy saving power! Never a wish in his heart has thou disappointed, never a  
 11 prayer on his lips denied. With happy surprises thou dost meet him on his way,  
 12 dost set a crown of pure gold on his head. Praise be for life! Long continuance  
 13 of his reign thou dost grant him, no fear withstanding till the end of time. Great is the  
 14 reason thy protection has won thy king glory and high honour thou hast made  
 15 him. As evidencing instruments of thy goodness, numbered by the multitude of thy  
 16 favour, he stands firm, trusting in the Lord; the favour of the most High is with  
 17 him.  
 18 **A**nd thy enemies—thou shalt deal thy power; that right hand will not know  
 19 either malice or repentance. As thy favour, they will withdraw away like grass in the  
 20 snow, withered away by the Lord's anger, burnt up in his flames. Their will no  
 21 the least of their loved, their ear will watch from the world of men. For how  
 22 is all their hope changed against thee, all their pride slain in nothing! Thou wilt  
 23 now them; thou is thy love to make their enemies.  
 24 **L**aud high above us, Lord, is thy protecting strength; our song, our praise,  
 25 shall be of thy goodness.

## PSALM 31

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

1 **M**Y God, my God, why have thou forsaken me? Lowly I call, but my prayer  
 2 cannot reach thee. Thou dost not answer, my thirst, when I cry out to thee  
 3 day and night, thou dost not heed. Thou art thou gone the less, dwelling in the  
 4 holy place; Israel's ancient heart. Is not in thee that our fathers trusted, and  
 5 thou dost reward their trust by delivering them; they called to thee, and thou  
 6 answerest; thou need to be ashamed of such trust as theirs. But I, poor wretch, have no  
 7 sustained life, I am a by-word in all, the laughing stock of the subtle. All those  
 8 who catch sight of me fill to mocking; mocking not in vain, while they see their  
 9 heads in vain. He considered himself in the Lord, why does not the Lord come  
 10 to his rescue, and set his forsaken soul?  
 11 **W**hat hand has thou drew me out from my mother's womb? Why dost thou  
 12 my refuge when I long at the breast? From the house of my birth, thou art my  
 13 guardian; since I left my mother's womb, thou art my God! Do not leave me now,  
 14 when trouble is close at hand; when thou, when I have none to help me. My  
 15 mother sing me round, praised thee as a lord of men, among as bulls from Bashan,  
 16 so might a lion threaten me within Jew, roaring for its prey. I am spent as with  
 17 want, all my bones out of joint, my heart turned to madness; even within me  
 18 perished is thy strength, like clay to the baking, and my tongue sticks fast to my  
 19 mouth; thou hast laid me in the dust, to die. Forsaking thou me like a pack of

dogs, their wicked snapping hedges not for they have torn holes in my haunches and loins: I can count my bones one by one, and they stand there watching me, as gazing at me in triumph. They divide my words among them, and hiss for my garments. Then, Lord, do not stand at a distance, if thou wouldst aid me, come in quickly to my side. Only life is before me: that from the sword, from the power of of these dogs, rescue me from the very mouth of the lion, the very horns of the wild ones that have brought me thus low.

Then I will praise the thy name in my brethren; where thy people gather, as I will join in singing thy praise. Praise the Lord, all ye that are his worshippers; as known to him from the sons of Jacob, covenant to him from Israel's seed. He is has not scorned or slighted the appeal of the friendship, nor turned his face away from me; my cry for help did not go unheeded. Take what I owe thee, my song as of praise before a great assembly. I will pay my vows to the Lord in the sight of his worshippers: the poor shall see me, and have their fill; those who look for the Lord will my soul be praise of him, Refreshed by your hearts' melody! The Lord dwelling on earth will bestow themselves of the Lord, and come back to him; all the ends of the earth will worship before him; to the Lord royalty as belongs, the whole world's homage is his due. Mine shall their worship, him only, as that are laid to rest in the earth, even from their dust they shall arise. I, too, as shall live on in his presence, and long children to serve him; there to a later age shall speak of the Lord's name; those to a race that must yet be born shall tell the story of his faithfulness, Hear what the Lord did.

## PSALM 22

(A psalm. Of David.)

Thou Lord is my shepherd; how can I lack anything? He gives me a resting-  
place where there is green pasture, leads me out to the cool water's brink,  
refreshed and content. As in honour gloried, by many paths he leads me; dark  
be the valley about my path, but I fear none while he is with me; thy rod, thy  
scepter are my comfort. Righteous my feet walk, while those that spread a banquet  
for me, richly there dost anoint my head with oil, well filled my cup. All my life  
thy loving favour pursue me; through the long years thy Lord's house shall  
be my dwelling-place.

## PSALM 23

(Of David. A psalm.)

Thou Lord owns earth, and all earth's fulness, the round world, and all its  
inhabitants. Who dost has built it out from the sea, poised it on the hidden  
foundations?

Who dost climb the mountains of the Lord, and appear in his sanctuary? The  
golden is set, the pure is burnt; one who serves on his heart as lying tales, as  
sweet treacherously to his neighbours. His to receive a blessing from the Lord,  
away from God, his own defender. His the true bread that will last, will keep  
for the presence of the God of Jacob.

Bring back, doors, higher yet, much higher, monumental gates, to let the King  
enter in triumph! Who is this great King? Who for the Lord, mighty and strong,  
the Lord mighty in battle? Bring back, doors, higher yet, much higher, im-  
mortal gates, to let the King enter in triumph! Who is this great King? It is to  
the Lord of Armies that comes here on his way triumphant.

## PSALM 16

(Of David.)

1 **A**ss, my heart goes out to thee, O Lord, my God. Rejoice not the trust I have in  
 2 **A**thee, let not my enemies boast of my downfall. Can any that trust in thee be  
 3 disappointed, as they are disappointed who lightly boast their wealth? Direct my  
 4 way, Lord, as thou wilt, teach me thy own paths. Then let thy saints praise and  
 5 thank me, O God my deliverer, my shining hope. Forget not, Lord, thy pity, thy  
 6 mercies of long ago. Give heed, too, more to the sins and failures of my youth,  
 7 how thick mercifully of me, as thou, Lord, art ever gracious. How gracious is the  
 8 Lord, how faithful, guiding me straight from birth to the present! In his own love he  
 9 will guide the humble, in his own paths the humble he will guide. Fasten to thy  
 10 hoping of goodness and deliverance, and the Lord's dealings will be ever gracious,  
 11 ever faithful with thee. Kindly be thy judgement of my sin, for thy own name's  
 12 sake, my gracious one.  
 13 Let a man but fear the Lord, wise path to choose he doubts no longer. Much  
 14 for he shall have of his lands and to his heirs leave them. No wronger the Lord  
 15 is, no reject his righteous, no his true worshippers. On the Lord I fix my eyes  
 16 continually, trusting him to save thy feet from the snare. Pay thee, Lord, as thou  
 17 hast me kindness and favour. Quies my heart of its troubles, deliver me from  
 18 my distress. Hardens and wisdom, I claim the gift, as my sin be merciful.  
 19 Not less many are my foes, and how bitter is the grudge they bear me. Take  
 20 my soul into thy keeping, come to my rescue, do not let me be disappointed of my  
 21 trust in thee. Uprightness and purity be my shield, as I wait patiently, Lord,  
 22 for thy help. When wilt thou deliver Israel, my God, from all his troubles?

## PSALM 16

(Of David.)

1 **L**ORD, be thou my judge, have I not guided my steps clear of wrong? Have I  
 2 **L**earned in the Lord, only to stumble on my paths? Tell me, Lord, just me to  
 3 the proof, among my nearest desires and thoughts. Ever I keep thy statutes in mind,  
 4 **and** thy righteousness bears me company. I have not consorted with false men,  
 5 **nor** joined in plotting evil. I have shunned the company of the wicked, arise as  
 6 **at** my ease with sinners. With the pure in heart I will wash my hands clean, and  
 7 **into** my place among them in thy hall, there making thy praises known, telling  
 8 **the** story of all thy wonderful deeds. How wilt, Lord, I love the house where thou  
 9 **dwellest**, the shrine of thy glory! Lord, never cease this and be true with the  
 10 **wicked**, who lie among the blood-thirsty. Hands are stained with guilt, palms  
 11 **are** ever itching for a bribe. Be it mine to guide my steps clear of wrong; deliver me  
 12 **in** thy mercy. Do not ground my foot on sin where his people gather; I will join  
 13 **in** singing the Lord's name.

## PSALM 16

(Of David.)

1 **FROM** Lord is my light and my deliverance; whom have I to fear? The Lord  
 2 **is** my light, whom shall I hold in dread? Vainly the watching does  
 3 **about** me, as if they would tear me in pieces, vainly my enemies threaten me,  
 4 **all** as trees they shall wither and fall. Though a whole host were arrayed against me,

my heart would be undisturbed; though no armed man should threaten me, still  
I would not lose my confidence. One request I have ever made of the Lord, in  
my claim to still, to dwell in the Lord's house my whole life long, seeing content  
in the Lord's presence, gazing at his temple. In his royal tent he takes me, in  
the highest room of his royal tent, safe from peril. On a rock fortress he lifts me  
high up; my head rises high above the enemies that surround me, I will make  
an offering of triumphant songs in this fortress of his, singing and praising the  
Lord.

Listen to my voice, Lord, when I cry to thee; hear and again. Trust to my  
father's promise, I have seen only the stars, I long, Lord, the sky passage. Do not  
hide thy face, do not turn away from thy servant in anger, but give me still thy  
aid; do not forsake me, do not neglect me. O God, my defender. Father and  
mother may neglect me, but the Lord takes me into his care. Lord, show me the  
way thou hast chosen for me, guide me both the way past, lest as I am with  
weakness, do not give me over to the will of my opponents, when false witnesses  
stand up to accuse me, break me down down against me. My faith is, I will yet  
live to see the Lord's salvation. Thus patiently for the Lord to help thee be true,  
and let thy heart take comfort; wait patiently for the Lord.

## PSALM 19

(Of David.)

Thou dost, my Lord, my refuge, I cry aloud, do not leave my cry unanswered.  
I speak to thee, or I am so bereft that a dumb man, sinking to the ground. Listen  
Lord, to my plea as I call upon thee, as I raise my hands in prayer towards thy  
holy temple. Do not silence me, with the wicked, before thy holiness: men  
with men who traffic in iniquity, men who talk of peace to their neighbours, while  
their hearts are full of malice. For them, the reward of their own acts, their  
own evil ways, so they did, be it done to them, in their own evil report. Of the  
Lord's acts, the Lord's ways, they seek no length, none to their, none deepening.

Blamed be the Lord's name, my plea is heard: the Lord is my strength and  
shield. Thinking in him, I found refuge; there is triumph to my heart, on my  
lips the song of praise. The Lord defends his own people, protects the king he  
has anointed. Lord, save thy people, bless thy own chosen men; be their ship-  
board, exultant in thy arm upholding them.

## PSALM 20

(A psalm. Of David.)

Come to God, make your offering to the Lord; an offering to the Lord of honour  
and glory, an offering to the Lord of the glory that tells his name: worship  
the Lord, in holy vessels hallowed. The name of the Lord is heard over the waters,  
when the glorious God descends, the Lord, descending over evildoers: when  
the Lord's voice is in its power, the Lord's voice is in its mastery. The Lord's voice, that  
breaks the cooking, the Lord breaks the nature of Lebanon. With Lebanon and  
Sion leap high as a bullock leaps, bound of the wild sea. The Lord's righteousness  
breaks fire: the Lord's voice makes the wilderness rock; the Lord, redding the  
wilderness of Cadiz. The Lord's voice was the oak-tree a-swaying, splits the  
deep forest bare. Meanwhile, in his sanctuary, there is no sound but tell of his  
glory. Out of a raging flood, the Lord makes a dwelling-place; the Lord set up  
thousand as a flag for ever. And this Lord will give strength to his people; the  
Lord will give his people his own blessing of peace.

## PSALM 30

(A psalm. A hymn for the feast of the temple's dedication. Of David.)

1 **P**raise to thee, Lord, thou hast taken me under thy protection, and hastened  
 2 my deliverance from their midst: I cried out to the Lord my God, and thou didst  
 3 grant my recovery. So didst thou bring me back, Lord, from the place of shadows,  
 4 and thou hast rescued me from the very edge of the grave. Sing praise to the Lord, thou hast  
 5 saved, Lord, his name with thanksgiving. For a moment last his anger, for a little  
 6 time his long sorrow is but the pain of a night, and joy comes in the morning.  
 7 O Lord, thou hast thought, in those of mine, Nothing can shake me now: such power  
 8 and staff, Lord, hast thou surely granted me. Then thou didst turn thy face away  
 9 from me, and I was at peace no more. Lord, I was able to play with them, my  
 10 upon God for glory: How will it make thee to take my life? I can but go down into  
 11 silence! Lift up, Lord, and spare, Lord, in thy aid befriend me. With that, thou  
 12 didst turn my sadness into rejoicing, thou hast undone the net which I was in, and  
 13 hast guided me down with gladness. So may this heart never tire of singing praise;  
 14 O Lord my God, I will give thanks to thee for ever.

## PSALM 30

(To the choir-masters. A psalm. Of David.)

1 **T**o thee, O Lord, I look for refuge, never let me be ashamed of my trust in thy  
 2 faithful care, deliver me. Grant me salvation, and make haste to rescue me  
 3 my afflictions, my stronghold of distress, to save me from peril. Thou dost  
 4 strengthen and defend me, thou, for thy own name, dost guide and rescue me;  
 5 by thee protected, I shall escape from the snare that has hidden in my path. Into  
 6 the hands I commend my spirit: thou, God ever faithful, wilt claim me for thy-  
 7 self. Let faith provide thee by the worship of false gods for me, advantage: but the  
 8 Lord, I will triumph and exult in thy mercy: it was thou that didst pity my weakness,  
 9 and save me when I was fast bound; before the enemy's wills could close around  
 10 me, the open plain lay at my feet.  
 11 And now, Lord, have compassion on my distress; salvation has shamed my  
 12 eyes, from the enemy, soul and body. My life is all grief, my years are but sighs;  
 13 for very misery, my strength flies away, my frame is wasted. Open to my love  
 14 do not shut me, even to my neighbours: I am a thing of mere sorrow; my friends are  
 15 distant, and the pasture by whom I am fed, I am lost to memory, like a dead  
 16 man, discarded like a broken pitcher. On every side their busy whispering comes  
 17 to my ears: perch all around, so powerful the conspiracy that threatens my life.  
 18 And with, Lord, my heart is torn in pain, and shaking with I cry, Thou art my God, my  
 19 God is in thy hand; save me from the enemy's power, save me from my pursuer!  
 20 Smile on the sorrow now more, and deliver me in thy mercy. Lord, do not be  
 21 so pleased in vain, Disappoint the wishes of those hopes, but thou dost, thou  
 22 hast shown thy mercy: let salvation fall on those contrite lips, that again minister  
 23 of the innocent in the days of their pain and sorrow.  
 24 What measures of loving-kindness, Lord, dost thou meet up for the men who  
 25 fear thee, rewarding their confidence for all the world to see! Thy presence is a  
 26 sanctuary, to hide them away from the world's notice; thy tabernacle a refuge  
 27 from its angry darts. Blessed be the Lord, so wonderful is his mercy, so strong  
 28 the wall of his protection. I thought, bewildered, that thy merciful ear had lost  
 29 sight of me; but I cried out to thee, and thou hast rescued me from my pain.



Let us the Lord tell, you who worship him, the Lord keeps faith with his servants, 10  
and rejects the schemes of the pious above measure. Take heed, keep high you in  
awe, all you that wait patiently for the Lord.

## PSALM 38

(Of David. A psalm.)

My sinners are they who have their faults forgiven, their transgressions looked  
askance; blessed is the man who is not guilty in the Lord's reckoning, the heart 1  
that hides no treasors. While I kept my eyes open, everywhere I went sighing, so  
wound my heart away, bowed down day and night by thy chastisements; still my 2  
strength dried, false as is mid-summer heat. As hot I made my transgressions, 3  
ignores no thou, and hid my sin no longer; Pious of mine, said I, I have confidence  
in the Lord; and with that, thou didst smite the path of my sin. Let every devout 4  
soul, then, turn to thee in prayer when hard times befall; rise the floods never  
so high, they shall have no power to reach it. There are my hiding-places, when 5  
I am sore beset; songs of triumph are all about me, and thou my deliverer.

Friend, be not counted thus, gaze for thee the path thy feet should tread; let 6  
my presence watch over thee. Do not be like the steed and the mule, without 7  
masters which will not come near thee unless their spirit is tamed by bit and  
bridle. Again and again the sinners must feel the lash, he who trusts in the Lord is  
false nothing but mercy all around him. Fear not, be glad, and rejoice in the 8  
Lord, true hearts, make your trust in him.

## PSALM 42

Thirsting, but with, in the Lord's true heart, it is prayer to praise him. Give 1  
thanks to the Lord with the harp's music, praise him with a harp of ten strings.  
For him let a new song be sung; give him of your heart, sound the harp loudly. 2  
The Lord's word is true, he is faithful in all his dealings, faithfulness he loves, 3  
and the just sound, the whole earth involves with the Lord's goodness. It was 4  
the Lord's word that made the heavens, the bound of his lips that peopled them;  
he it is who sends up the waters of the sea as is a cloud, treasures up all its 5  
waves. Let the whole earth hold the Lord in debt, let all the inhabitants of the  
world stand in awe of him; let again, and they were made, he give his command, 6  
and their frame was fashioned. As the Lord's bidding, a nation's purposes come to  
as nothing, a people's designs are shattered; his own designs stand firm for ever; 7  
protection after protection, his will does not reverse.

Blessed the nation that calls on the Lord by own God, the people he has chosen to  
use to better. Looking down from heaven, he watches all mankind, his dwelling-  
place has the whole world in view; he has disclosed each man's nation, and weighs in  
the scales of such. There is no protection for kings in powerful armies, for no  
warriors in abundant prowess; nor shall horses bring down the quarry, strong or  
strength that cannot save. It is the Lord, reaching over those who fear him and re-  
spond in his mercy, that will protect their lives, will feed them in times of famine. 10  
Fairly we wait for the Lord's help; he is our strength and our shield; in him is  
our hearts' true constant, in his holy name we trust. Lord, let thy mercy be  
set upon us, who put all our confidence in thee.

## PSALM 30

(Of David, when he signed madmen at the court of Achishlech, so that Achishlech sent him away, and he escaped.)

- 1 **A**t all times I will bless the Lord, his praise shall be as my life continually.  
 2 **A**ll my blessing in the Lord, before me, beside me, and before. "Come,  
 3 sing the Lord's praise with me, let us sing his name together. Did I not look on  
 4 the Lord, and find a hearing? did he not deliver me from all my terrors? How  
 5 look to him, and in him find happiness, here is no room for doleful looks.  
 6 Friends and folk may still call on the Lord and gain his ear, and be rescued from  
 7 all their afflictions. "Guardians of those who fear the Lord, his angels surround  
 8 their side, and bring deliverance. How precious the Lord is! Trust and prove it:  
 9 blessed is the man that learns to trust in him. It is for you, his chosen servants,  
 10 to fear the Lord, those who fear him never go wanting. Surely do the good, his  
 11 fear longer and more blessing they lack not that look to him.  
 12 "Know, then, my children, when the fear of the Lord is come and there is joy  
 13 reaching. Long life, and prosperous days, who would have them for the asking?  
 14 My reward is, keep the tongue clear of harm, and stripes free from every member -  
 15 that word. "Fleece of wool cleanse them, but within the goats, let praise be all they  
 16 want and aim. On the upright the Lord's eye ever looks forward; his ear is  
 17 open to their pleading. "Fervence in his favour for the wrong-doers, he will soon  
 18 make their name vanish from the earth. Moved by the cry of the innocent, the  
 19 Lord soon shows how true are all their afflictions. No more is he so patient towards, so  
 20 ready to defend the troubled spirit. Though a hundred trials tempt the innocent,  
 21 the Lord will bring him safely through them all. Under the Lord's keeping, every  
 22 in fear of him is safe, no one of them shall suffer harm. "Willing hasten to his own  
 23 calling, the number of innocents will bear their punishment.  
 24 "The Lord will claim his reward as his own, they go unimproved that put their  
 25 trust in him.

## PSALM 34

(Of David.)

- 1 **I** now, against my generals, claim the example who die to save against me;  
 2 **I** eagerly sought and shield, bear thrust in my defence. With poised knee, for  
 3 the way against my pursuers, whisper in my heart, I am here to save them. For  
 4 my mortal weakness, shame and disappointment, for my ill-will men and all,  
 5 ride and oppress, dash before the wind, with the angel of the Lord to comfort  
 6 them, bright and bountiful on their way, with the angel of the Lord to pursue.  
 7 "Whosoever they have speed their feet for me, wondrously they have dug the cruel  
 8 stone, none he makes down, overthrow them, their own men around, their own  
 9 make none their shield. "Hills to triumph in the Lord, to trust of the old he brings me;  
 10 this be the cry of my whole being. There is none like thee, Lord; who also rescue  
 11 the afflicted from the hand of tyrants, the poor, the deviate, from his oppressor.  
 12 "See how polluted women have come to me, to beset me and change of  
 13 in which I know nothing. How they have made my business with covets, and left  
 14 me homeless! "There was, when there were only what did I do? "Rebelling was  
 15 in my weary agonies I kept fast, poured from my heart's depths. I went my way  
 16 talk, to see the morning for brother or friend, bowed with grief, to see that  
 17 break a mother's love. And now it was my turn to crouch under Goliath's blow;  
 18 what did they? Gladly they not, and plotted to attack the unknown, too at one

without ending, talked and scouted me, gauding their necks in hatred. Loos, as with their look an understanding child! With their hands my life as the mercy of those roaring lions! Lay me free to praise and thank them before the multitude that sit through day and night. No more the love of triumph in the eye of your weakness of love, that weakness needs me!

In all their whispering, never a word of peace; they will still be plotting against us the land's realm. See how they creep and move at me, crying out, Joy, Joy that is us should have lived to see this! Those men, Lord, hurt soon fit, do not pass it by as in silence; Lord, do not abandon me. Bend down! and take my part, give me to speedy release, my Lord and my God. As these are just, O Lord my God, give us up ahead for me, never let them triumph over me, never let them think, All as goes well, and boast that they have made a prey of me. Disappoint them, fill us them with confusion, the men who delight in my weakness; never share with shame and self-reproach, the enemies that triumph over me. Joy and gladness to be theirs, who spurned my innocence; Praise to the Lord! for their cry, the Lord who defends his servant. And all day long, for the just awaiting, this tongue is still made known thy praise.

## PSALM 35

(To the choir-master. Of David, the Lord's servant.)

Deer in his heart the deer hears the whispering of reed, and loses sight of the deer of God, shares himself with the thoughts that his misdoings go un-discovered, seem no reproach. No word on his lips but is cruel and false; even a subtle thought, a kindly deed. He lies awake plotting mischief, and leads himself in every evil course, never weary of wrong-doing.

Loos, thy mercy is high as heaven; thy righteousness reaches to the clouds; thy justice stands firm as the everlasting hills, the wisdom of thy decrees is deep as the deep. Lord, thou dost give protection to man and beast, do rich as thy direct mercy; under the shadow of those wings the frail children of earth will find confidence. With thy rich love thou wilt console them, fill them drink deep as thy fountain of consolation. As thou is the source of all life, thy brightness will break it on our eyes like dawn. Still let thy mercy dwell with those who acknowledge thee, thy favour with upright hearts; do not suffer the proud to sample on me, the evil will be disposed too. One who a full month the wrong-doers, how they are cut down to earth, and can keep their feet so moved!

## PSALM 36

(Of David.)

At their insolent, blind, when the wicked thrives, how they enjoy the lot of earth-dwell! they will soon fade like the grass, like the green leaf wither away. No chance to rest in the Lord and do good; live on thy love, and take thy rest, all thy loving hand in the Lord, as he will give them what thy heart desires. Constant thy love to the Lord, and trust in him he will prosper thee, making thy journey clear as the day, the lord of the open bright as the sun at noon. Shout and praise, to the Lord's mercy love thee, never looking over the man that has his own way, and driven by valuing. But the complacent, those displeased, do not let their heart live as evil men; the evil-minded will be disappointed, and patient souls, they wait for the Lord, second none. Forgive yet a little, and thy patience will be seen as mercy; they will search for him to find him, while patient is mine are the Lord's love, enjoying great peace.

Grasping his neck with arms, the wrong-doer plots against the innocent, and is

cannot see his own rock, casting; but the Lord sees it, and laughs at his wicked.  
 14 How they draw the sword, how they bend the bow, their sinners, so being sure  
 15 of his helpless poverty, as smother the upright: words that will pierce their own  
 16 hearts, bows that will break in pieces: innocents, all destroyed, but the bottom of  
 17 the wicked in their abundance: you felt the strength of their arms, and will the  
 18 Lord has the just in his keeping. Justly the Lord watches over the lives of the  
 19 righteous; they will hold their land for ever, undisturbed by adversity, in time  
 20 of human evil: sinners. Adversity will yet come to an end, like the spring's flood  
 21 they will die, the Lord's sinners, relentless of his sinners. Let the sinners be cut,  
 22 and never again, till the good man will be a generous giver: with the Lord's  
 23 blessing, and the land is fair, his ban is death. Man's feet cannot firm, if the Lord  
 24 is with him: prosper his journey: he may stumble but never fall, with the Lord's  
 25 hand to his. How young he was, and I have grown old, yet never did I see the good  
 26 turn sinners, or his children tugging their heads: will he leave without sin,  
 27 and soon old down bleedings on his country. Offend no more, rather do good,  
 28 and will be at rest continually: the Lord is very just, and will not abandon his faithful  
 29 servants. Perish the sinners, forgotten to the name of the evil-doer, but those will  
 30 hold their land, and live on it always or not.  
 31 Righteous is not the good man's life, well weighed are all his thoughts: his  
 32 steps never falter, because the law of God rules in his heart. Sinners he is with,  
 33 plotting against the life of the innocent: but the Lord will never leave him in  
 34 their power, never shall him guilty when he is assigned. Then the Lord, and  
 35 follow the path he has chosen: or he will see them up to procession of thy land, and  
 36 thou wilt live to see the wicked come to pain. Until presently, I saw the right-  
 37 ous show himself high as the towering cedars: then, when I passed by, he was there  
 38 as he began, and I looked in vain to find him. Viewers now and sinners: mark  
 39 at them well, for that they presently will leave a tale behind them, while sinners are  
 40 as rooted out: every root, and their gardens never prosper. When affliction comes,  
 41 the Lord is the refuge and defence of the innocent: the Lord will aid and deliver  
 42 them, rescue and preserve them from the power of wickedness, because they put  
 43 their trust in him.

## PSALM 37

(A psalm. Of David. For a memorial.)

1 **T**rust myself, Lord, not thy vengeance, thy charishment, not thy confusion:  
 2 I trust. Thy arrows pierce me, the hand smites me hard: the spear has driven  
 3 every all health from my body, never a stone aimed to it, as arrows are my sin.  
 4 My own wrong-doing: wrong high above me, hangs on me like a heavy burden:  
 5 and wounds light and swift, with my own folly to blame. Down, down, forced  
 6 to the earth, I go mourning all day long, my whole frame aches, my whole body  
 7 is diseased, to grief, to crush: I grow-sick in the weakness of my heart. Then,  
 8 Lord, because of my longings, as companies of mine escape them: render my  
 9 heart, give my strength, let my light that shines in my eyes in mine no longer.  
 10 Friends and neighbours that must not keep their distance from a doomed man:  
 11 old companions from me. Ill-wishers also grieve me: life brief for years above  
 12 me, threaten me with ruin, rebelliously their malice plots against me. And I, all  
 13 at the while, am deaf to their threats, dumb before my accusers: mine the rebuffing  
 14 me, and the tongue that utters no defence. On thee, Lord, my hope is set now,  
 15 O Lord my God, will listen to me. Faith is the prayer I make, do not let my  
 16 enemies triumph over me, boast of my downfall. Full full will I sing, when  
 17 to check my wrong: I am ever ready to publish my guilt, ever anxious over my sin.  
 18 Unrepentant, their malice still pouring, so many that hate me a girdle to their

truly, awaiting good with me, and for the very righteous of my house waiting is me. Do not fail me, O Lord my God, do not forsake me; hasten to my defence, O Lord, my only refuge.

## PSALM 38

(To the choir-master, Ekkeim. A psalm. Of David.)

It was my resolve to live mortally, and some was my tongue and sin, when I was in the presence of sinners, I kept my mouth gagged. Shame and passion, I imposed the good, but indignation came back, and my heart burned within me, the fire kindled by my thoughts, so that at last I kept silence no longer.

Lord, wait me of my sin, and how few my days are, teach me to know my own insufficiency. See how thou hast measured my years with a brief span, how my life is nothing in thy reckoning! Alas, what is my race living but a breath that passes? Truly thou wilt be a shadow, with what vain anxiety by boards up riches, when he cannot tell who will have the counting of them! What hope thou hast in mine, Lord? In thee alone I trust. Clear me of that manifold guilt which makes me the laughing-stock of fools, impatient and uncomplaining, because I know that my troubles come from thee, spare me this punishment, I shun under thy powerful hand. When thou dost chastise men to punish his sin, thou art as all be loved, as if the earth had feared it were a branch that passes, and returns. Lament, Lord, to my power, let my cry reach the hearing, and my tears will answer. What am I in thy sight but a parent-ly, a wanderer, as all my fathers were? Thy loving rebuke, give me some touch of comfort, before I go away and am known no more.

## PSALM 39

(To the choir-master. Of David. A psalm.)

PAINFULLY I waited for the Lord's help, and at last he turned his look towards me as up out of a deadly pit, where the sinners had settled deep, and gave me a foothold on the rock, with firm ground to stand. He has framed a coronation on my lips, a song of praise to our God, as all who stand by with reverence, and with awe is the Lord. Happy is the man whose trust is thus bestowed, who trusts the rock of strange gods, the base of lies. O Lord my God, how long is the story of thy marvellous deeds! What can man like this? How should I tell the tale of those wonders, past all numbering? No sacrifice, no offering was thy demand, enough that thou hast given me an ear ready to hear. Thou hast not found any pleasure in burnt-offerings, in sacrifices for sin. For thou, I said, I am coming to fulfil what is written of me, where the book lies unrolled, to do thy will, O my God, is all my desire, to carry out the law of thine which is written in my heart. And I told the story of thy just dealings before a great throng; he witness, Lord, that I do not seal my lips. Thy just dealings are as secret hidden away in my heart; I hear of thy faithful protection, proclaim the mercy, the righteousness of thine for all to hear it.

Lord, do not withhold thy pity from me; thy mercy and righteousness that have ever been my shield. I am bound with vows past numbering, obedient by my sin, they fill me proper, crushed as the hair on my head, my strength fails me. Deign, Lord, to see me from Lord, give hand and help. Disappointments do shame to fools, who lay plans against my life, may they stick away covered with confusion, who now rejoice over my downfall. Joy, joy is their cry, death-curses to be them, woe, their hopes failed. Rejoicing and triumph for all the world that look to thee; Praise to the Lord, will ever be their song, who now long for the old.

- 6 Give help, O God, O God, and the Lord is concerned for me! There are my champions,  
and my refuge, do not lag, my God, do not lag on the way.

PSALM 40

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

- 1 **DELIVER** is that man who takes thought for the poor and the destitute; the  
Lord will keep him safe in time of trouble. The Lord will watch over him,  
and give him long life and happiness in earth, and health his enemies of their  
evil. The Lord will sustain him when he has had riches, even all his health in his  
old age.
- 2 Lord have mercy on me, in my prayer, bring healing to a soul that has waited  
against thee. Surely my enemies cannot see; How long, they ask, can he wait this,  
I wait his name to be praised? When one comes to visit me, he comes with words  
I wish, his heart full of malice, ready to go on and plot against me. These they  
revert, my enemies, talking of me in whisper, deriding me; When I asked prayer  
he bowed on him; he will leave his lord no peace. Why, the very man I trusted more,  
my own intimate friend, who shared my bread, has lifted his heel to trip me up.
- 3 Lord, have mercy on me, give me back health, and let me escape them! Plead  
as of the fever, my enemies are terrified of their malice, thou dost defend my  
iniquities, overcome with thou health me from the prison.
- 4 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from the beginning to the end of time, Amen,  
Amen.

PSALM 41

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of the sons of Guni.)

- 1 **OW** long, my whole soul longs for thee, as a deer for running waters: my whole  
soul thirsts for God, the living God; shall I never again make my pilgrimage  
unto God's presence? Morning and evening, my soul will say: O God! I want  
to come to the altar. Where is thy God now? Memories come back to me yet,  
singing the hours; how often I would join with the throng, leading the way to  
God's house, amid voices of joy and thanksgiving, and all the noise of jubilee.
- 2 God, art thou still discontent? With thee never be at peace! Wait for God's help;  
I will not cease to cry out in thankfulness, My champion and my God.
- 3 In my soul would I will think of thee, here in this land of Jordan and Hermon,  
I live on Mount Lebanon. O depths under heaven is nowhere near the star  
of the floods that season; waves after waves, east after west, overtake me.
- 4 Would he live again, the day with his mercy, what power would I sing at evening  
to the Lord God who is life for me! Thou art my stronghold, I cry out to him  
still, but thou art a thought for me! Must I go mourning, with enemies pressing  
on me back? Indeed he has broken down of my passions. Where is thy God now?
- 5 And, art thou still discontent? With thee never be at peace! Wait for God's help;  
I will not cease to cry out in thankfulness, My champion and my God.

PSALM 42

- 1 **OW** much would my soul give me praise against a heart that hates me, plots  
to turn me from a mountain for and road. Thou, O God, art all my strength;  
why hast thou cast me off? Must I go mourning, with enemies pressing me hard?
- 2 The light of thy presence, the fulfiling of thy promise, let them be my song,  
helping me safe to thy holy mountains, to the tabernacle where thou dwellest.
- 3 There I will go up in the place of God, the giver of triumphant happiness; there are

my own God, with the help I hymn thy praise. Lord, yet there still despond? Will thou never be at peace? Will thy God's help? I will not cease to cry out to thy faithful ones. My champion and my God.

## PSALM 41

(To the chief-musicians. Of the sons of Core. A psalm.)

Once, the tale has come to our ears—have not our fathers told us—of the great things thou didst in their time, in days long ago; it was thy power that gave them a home by routing out the heathen, crushing and disposing nations to make room for them. It was not by their own reward that our fathers won the land, it was not their own strength that brought them victory; it was the work of thy hand, the strength, thy smile shone upon them, in great of thy favour. I say turn to King, to God, now this; who else next deliverance to Jacob? Through thee we raised our enemies under the protection we craved their onslaught. Not in my bow I trusted, not in my sword I looked for safety; things it was to save us from our enemies, and serve their malice with confusion. In God was our trust; his name we praise unceasingly.

And now? Now, O God, thou hast deserted us, and put us to shame, by refusing to us into battle with our enemies. Then dost put us to flight before us; sending our warriors plunder us as they will. Thou hast made us like sheep sold for food, scattered here and there among the heathen; thou hast scattered us among the people without profit, making us rich rewards for thy foes. Thou hast turned us into a laughing-stock for our neighbours, mocked and derided by all who dwell around us; all the heathen make a sport of us, and deride us from their high places as we in turn. Does any disgrace confront us, any shame we covered with confusion, as if hear nothing but reproach and railing, we care not enemies, none but our persecutors.

All this has come upon us, and it was not that we had forgotten thee. We have not been untrue to thy covenant, or withdrawn our hearts from thee, that we should let our steps wander away from thy path. And all the while thou wouldst be to us as a lion, unspite on every side, darkness hanging over us. If we had forgotten the name of our own God, and spread out our hands in prayer to the gods of the alien, would not be know of it? He can read the secrets of men's hearts; he knows, it is for thy sake that we turn death at every moment, reckoned on from then to sleep marked down for slaughter. Break through, Lord, why dost thou sleep out in Jordan, do not hinder us from thy presence for ever. How great thou can thy to the army, without a thought for our need and our affliction! Our pride is bowed in the dust, prostrate, we cannot lift ourselves from the ground. Arise, Lord, and if help us in thy mercy, claim us for thy own.

## PSALM 42

(To the chief-musicians, Melody. The Lilies. To the sons of Core. A psalm. A lament.)

For ever the thought has well up from my heart, the King's house for my shame; my weeper flows readily as the pen of a swift writer. There is more than mortal beauty, the lips overflow with gracious utterance, the blessings God has granted thee can never fail. God as thy sword as the stars, great warrior, gird thyself with all thy majesty and all thy beauty; ride on triumphant, in the name of faithfulness and justice. Doves cannot thy own might shall give thee, no sharp are the arrows, rebuking nations to thy will, denuding the hearts of the king's

1 **F**rendless. Thy throne, O God, endureth for ever and ever, the scepter of thy  
 2 royalty is a rod that rules true; thou hast been a friend to right, as money to  
 3 wrong, and God, thy own God, has given thee an nation to bring thee praise  
 4 beyond any of thy fellows. Thy garments are scented with myrrh, and aloes, and  
 5 cassia; from ivory palaces thou art borne speeding in thy chariot. Daughters of  
 6 kings come out to meet thee at thy right hand, amidst the spears, in Ophir gold  
 7 is wrought. (Listen, my daughters, and consider my words attentively, thou art to  
 8 be kept, henceforward, thy own nation, and the home of the fathers: thy beauty,  
 9 mine, is all for the king's delight; he is the Lord, and worship belongs to him.)  
 10 The people of Tyre, now, will have no part in so long; the middest of its citizens  
 11 will be courted thy breast. She comes, the princess, all this to me, her robe of  
 12 golden cloth, a robe of rich embroidery, to meet the King. The middest of her  
 13 breast follow her into the presence, all rejoicing, all triumphant, as they enter the  
 14 or king's palace! These shall have some writing of thy own fathers, and divide a world  
 15 in between them for their domains. While time lasts, mine it is to keep thy name  
 16 in remembrance; age after age, nations will do thee honour.

## PSALM 48

(To the choir-master. To the sons of Core. Miledir: The Virgin. A song.)

1 **G**OD in our refuge and stronghold, everlastingly, everlastingly, he has brought us in the best  
 2 of good. He has us to be strong, though earth should tremble about us, and the  
 3 hills be carried away into the depths of the sea. See how its waters rage and roar,  
 4 how the hills tremble before its might! The Lord of hosts is with us, the God  
 5 of Jacob is our refuge.  
 6 For the day of God, enriched with flowing waters, is the chosen sanctuary of  
 7 the most High. God dwells within her, and she stands unmoved; with break of  
 8 dawn he will gaze her deliverance. Nations may be in tumult, and thrones totter,  
 9 earth shall sink away before his voice; but the Lord of hosts is with us, the God of  
 10 Jacob is our refuge. Come near, and see God's acts, his marvels are done on  
 11 earth: how he puts us on and so wins all over the world, the low shinned, the  
 12 haughty shamed, the shields burst to shreds! Wait quietly, and you shall have  
 13 proof that I am God, claiming empire among the nations, claiming empire over  
 14 the world. The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.

## PSALM 49

(To the choir-master. Of the sons of Core. A psalm.)

1 **H**EAR your hands, all you nations, in applause, acclaim you: God with voice  
 2 of rejoicing. The Lord is high above us, and worthy of praise: he is the ever-  
 3 lasting Maker of all this earth: he has raised the nations to our will, bowed the Gen-  
 4 tiles like a reed, claimed us for his own portion, Jacob the fair the well beloved,  
 5 God goes up, first are the cries of victory, the Lord goes up, thrills the mountains.  
 6 **P**salms, a psalm, a psalm for our God, a psalm, a psalm for our King: God is  
 7 King of all the earth, round the horns of praise! God reigns over the heathen,  
 8 in God the nations are in balance. The rulers of the nations throw in their lot with  
 9 us, that worship Abraham's God; a God so high, he has all earth's prizes for his  
 10 wealth.

## PSALM 47

(A song. A psalm. Of the sons of Core.)

1 **T**HE Lord is great, great fortress is his day, there is the city where he, our God,  
 2 dwells. He dwells the peak of his holy mountain, the peak of the whole world,



and the four poles of earth, myriad Sion, the city of the great King: within these  
 walls, God has posited himself a sure defense. See, here the kings of the earth  
 have made common cause, and met there in arms! At the sight of him all was  
 bewilderment, and confusion, and dismay: their rank held of them, scattered as the  
 chaff of a mountain in the wind: not there military or coast-guard ships take the  
 eye-wind. There, in this city of the Lord of hosts, the city of our own God, we  
 have joined the tale long since told us, that God upholds her for all eternity  
 redefined in the temple, we give thanks for our deliverance. O God, wherever thy  
 name is known on earth, thy praise is told, ever true in thy dealings: well may  
 the hill of Zion rejoice, well may the towers of Jerusalem, at the doors  
 which thou, Lord, hast opened. Whatstore like, make the sound of her drums,  
 and count the number of them; mark well the deliverance that we have, pass all  
 her ramparts in review; then give the word to the new generation. Such is the  
 God, who is our God for ever and ever, our Shepherd eternally.

## PSALM 48

(To the chief-musician. Of the sons of Asaph. A psalm.)

**L**ORD, you nation far and wide let all the world give hearing, your deeds  
 of earth, and manfully born, for rich and poor the same lesson. Have we  
 who watch, daughters of a discerning heart, mine to overtake mysteries, and  
 reveal, with the king's music, things of deep import.

What need have I to be afraid in troubled times, when malice dogs my heels  
 and threatens me, midst of them who trust in their own strength, and boast of  
 their great power? No man can deliver himself from his human lot, paying  
 a ransom-price to God; nor great is the cost of a man's soul, even will the money  
 be his to prolong his days eternally and escape death. True it is, when man dies  
 his posterity shall perish no less; their riches will go to others, and the grave will  
 be their everlasting home. Age after age, they will live on there, under the hills:  
 they soon called their own. Short is man's enjoyment of earthly goods; much is  
 his with the house hearse, and he is no better than clay.

Hard path, that crosses the selfish Devil's road of the man that loves life!  
 There they lie in the world beneath, heeded like sheep, with death for their  
 shepherd, the pen for their master; soon, soon their lamps below, the grave for  
 its treasure. But our God will rescue from the power of the living darkness, to  
 a life that finds enjoyment with him. Do not be disturbed, then, when a man  
 grows rich, and there is no end to his household's magnificence; he cannot take  
 all that with him when he dies; magnificence will not follow him to the grave.  
 While we live, to earth becometh happy: Short but will carry my treasure: but soon as  
 he will be made one with the flow of his stream, over again to see the light. Short is  
 man's earthly enjoyment of earthly goods; much is his with the house hearse,  
 and he is no better than clay.

## PSALM 49

**I**T is the Lord God that speaks his message goes out to all the earth, from the  
 Jews' rise to its ending. One of him, in perfect beauty, God comes, revealed:  
 he will keep them no longer. Before him pass a singing throng; there is a shouting  
 some round about him. Oh, there on high, he summons heaven and earth to  
 witness the judgement pronounced on his people: Master in my presence say  
 faithful servants, who become my covenant with sacrifice. The chosen ones  
 whose presence him has, God who is our Judge.

3 Listen, my people, to these words of mine. Hark, Israel, to the proclamation as I make them: The God whom I serve is God. I do not find fault with them over the anything they, all day long thy burnt-offerings smelt before me. But the night I accept not any gifts from thy mouth, or incense from thy lips. I set utterly away every wild beast in the forest, the hills are mine, and the high tops of the desert. There is no hind from my house, no gift due to the sanctuary, for I know it all. If I want bounty, I will not complain of it to thee, if, when my number of wrath is full and all thy wrath remains. Wouldst thou have me not build thee, and dwell the in midst of gold? The sacrifice thou most offer to God is a sacrifice of praise, so will thou perform thy vow to the most High. So, when thou shalt know as time of trouble, I will deliver thee: then thou shalt intreat me as thou wilt.

14 But thou, to the altar, God speak: How is it that thou must repeat my vow? Inasmuch, by vow, and bond of my covenant with thee, and thou, all the while, hast no love for the amendment of thy ways, making every morning of mine in the morning? I will then set to witness the cloud which covers the path, as thou in the night with the altars. And thou wilt go from thy lips, and my anger is a ready temple of death, thou wilt sit on thrones, speaking evil of the father, as touching thy own mother's sin. Such were thy ways, and should I make no sign? Should I be there while I am with us then? Here is thy request; here is thy indictment made plain to thee. Think well on this, you that forget God, or his land is still suddenly, and there will be no delivering you. He knows the truth, who often as a sacrifice of praise thou bringest, and you shall see the strong power of God.

1992

1 (To the choir-masters. A psalm. Of David. when the prophet Nathan came to  
reproach him for his adultery with Bathsheba.)

1 **H**AVE MERCY ON ME, O God, as there are many sins in me, as the abundance  
2 of my iniquities, take out the record of my iniquities. Wash me clean,  
3 cleanse me, from my guilt, purge me of my sin, for guilt which I freely acknowledge  
4 before, the sin which is never hid in my sight. Then only my sin have redeemed  
5 is in the way I have disclosed; thy mercies were discovered, and will when thou  
6 givest word to them: true sight on thy sins. For indeed, I was born in sin; guilt went  
7 with me already when my mother conceived me. Thy love was a love of faithful  
8 love, and now, keep in my heart, thy mercies have instructed me. Thy grace has  
9 with a wash of hyssop, and I shall be clean minded, I shall be white; thou wilt  
10 purify and me of great guilt and rebelling, and the body that sin in the deceit  
11 shall I shall with truth.

19 Turn the spot away from my sins, blot out the remnant of my guilt, my God, bring a clean heart to birth within me; truthless were I, true life, love my bring.  
20 Do not trouble me from the presence, do not take my quiet every from me;  
21 give me back the comfort of thy loving peace, and throughout the day preserve  
22 me. So will I reach the wicked to follow thy paths; sinners shall come back  
23 to the straightness. My God, my divine Father, save me from the guilt of blood-  
24 shed. Thy temples shall bear of the sacrifice: O Lord, show with open my face,  
25 and my mouth shall tell of thy praise. Thou hast an altar for sacrifice, incense  
26 offerings, if I brought them, thou wouldst refuse. Now, O God, in my sacrifice,  
27 a broken spirit: heart that is humbled and contrite thou, O God, will never  
28 disdain. Lead, in thy great love and prosperity to Zion, so that the walls of Jeru-  
29 salem may thy spirit. Then leddest thou with safe pleasure in solemn sacrifice,  
30 in with such incense, offerings thou hastest fulfilled to be led unto the altar.

## PSALM 30

(To the choir-masters. A maskil. Of David, when Eliab, the Elionites, came and met him, David went into Abimelech's house.)

W<sup>H</sup>Y should men still take pains, unknown again, in the power of hasty bitterness?   
 Why should men stir the heart so mindless; the words are stone-edged, and there is a   
 malice. Cruelty, never kindness, is the word, whence, never honest speech; well   
 the false lips love the word that brings men to ruin. And will not God destroy   
 their words, root them up, drive them from thy house, all thy staff is broken among   
 being men no more? How can they still work, and tremble, and trust him then,   
 so much for the man who would have none of God's help, but relied on his own   
 of riches, and found his strength in leanness? And if turned like a faithful olive-   
 tree in the house of my God, I will trust for ever in his divine mercy. I will give   
 thee eternal thanks for all thou hast done, and thank, as more should ever thank,   
 of thy name, the faithful for my company.

## PSALM 31

(To the choir-masters. The Melch, Mahalot. A maskil. Of David.)

T<sup>R</sup>UTH is as God above us, is the food thought of righteous hearts. Wicked   
 tongues everywhere and harmfulness, there is not an innocent man among them.   
 God looks down from heaven at the race of men, no that can read that reflects,   
 and goes to search of him; but we, all have missed the mark and rebelled against   
 him, no innocent man is found to be found. When, can they learn nothing, all   
 these traffickers in iniquity, who feed themselves far on this people of mine, as if   
 it was food for their raving, and never derive God's name? What wonder if   
 for anyone them, where they have no cause for fear? What are the fears that   
 tremble there now? God has scattered their bones far and wide, forgotten as his   
 enemies must ever be. Oh, my Son, bring deliverance to Israel! Day of gladness   
 for Jacob, day of Israel's triumph, when God rescues the fortunes of his own   
 people.

## PSALM 32

(To the choir-masters. For stringed instruments. A maskil. Of David, when the men of Ziph told him that David was in hiding among them.)

L<sup>ORD</sup>, by the virtue of thy name deliver me, let thy sovereign power grant me   
 freedom, give a hearing, Lord, to my plea; let me speak, and know thou art   
 listening. Therefore has mine arm against me, force from that grudge can lift itself,   
 with no thought of God to check them. Ah, how God is here to help me; the Lord   
 has my safety in his keeping. Let the blow smite on my perceptions, ever faithful   
 to thy word, do thou overthrow them. So will I joyfully utter thee praises, and   
 praise thy name, Lord, as praised it must ever be, who thou has delivered me from   
 all guilt, and let me see the downfall of my enemies!

## PSALM 34

(To the choir-masters. For stringed instruments. A maskil. Of David.)

G<sup>IVE</sup> me malice to my purses, O God; do not spare this plea of mine; have   
 I said great evil. No man I find in my distress, distressed ever by the law and   
 cry of godless enemies, whose malicious spite would compass my ruin. My

- 1 I have a full of whirling thoughts, the fear of death pounds over me, writhing  
 2 not terrified, I see pain closing round me. Had I two wings, I say, as a dove  
 3 I too wings, with my wings and find rest? For would I flee, the wilderness should be  
 4 my shelter, so I might find speedy refuge from the whirlwind and the storm.  
 5 "Flee!" those dogs, Lord, in pain, bring destruction into their kennels! Do I not  
 6 see, clearly, violence and perfidy in the city? Day and night they make the  
 7 sound of it, and all the while there is wrong and oppression on the heart of  
 8 it. Its treacherous beauty decays and stinking with evil in its streets. Had some  
 9 enemy hated me, I could have borne it patiently; some open ill-wisher, I could  
 10 have shunned myself from his attack. But then, my sworn folk, my familiar  
 11 friends! How pleasant was the companionship we shared, then and I, how bitterly  
 12 we walked as fellow pilgrims to the house of God! May death overtake them,  
 13 may the angels swallow them up alive, their houses, their hearts so tainted with  
 14 evil.  
 15 But I will call upon God, and the Lord will save, still as evening and dawn  
 16 and noon I will cry aloud and make my plea known; he will not be deaf to my  
 17 appeal. He will rise up and judge, will remove me from attack, whose many sins  
 18 are set against me. He, the God who delight before him was, will show to me, will  
 19 be loving to him. Never a change of heart, never the fear of God: not can but will  
 20 turn against his friends, break his pledged word. Smooth as honey their lips,  
 21 when their hearts are all hatred; soft as oil their speech, yet never was dream  
 22 saved or doleful.  
 23 Can the bones of thy name upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee; never  
 24 will he let thee succumb, his support if thou be. Then, O God, thou who art  
 25 in a pit of ruin for blood-drinking, the treacherous, will cut like cut half their days,  
 26 but I, Lord, will put my trust in thee.

## PSALM 35

(To the choir-master, Melody: Yinnah Ninnah Ninnah. Of David. A psalm. When the Philistines had him in their hands at Gath.)

- 1 **H**AVE mercy on me, O God, downrightness answers by man's cruel oppres-  
 2 sion: enemies thy agencies send me under foot, as might there are to make  
 3 me upon me. In that, the most high, I will put my trust when pain overtake  
 4 me. I claim God's promise: my trust is in God, no mortal power can hurt me.  
 5 Therefore they oppress me, have not thought thus for my suffering: complete in  
 6 power, watching my steps as they plot against my life! O God, requite their  
 7 machinery, crush on the Goliath in thy anger. My watching life now knows  
 8 it as thou art ever at mine ear, thou dost heed and record it. Can cry aloud to thee,  
 9 and my enemies are driven back; shall I doubt that in my need? I claim God's  
 10 promise: my trust is in God, man's power cannot hurt me. The very words  
 11 thou dost send me, O God, my portion of praise shall fall; say thou can  
 12 spend my life from every peril, my feet from every slip! And shall I not enjoy  
 13 God's love, while the light of life is with me?

## PSALM 36

(To the choir-master, Melody: Do not despair. Of David. A psalm. When he took refuge from Saul in a cave.)

- 1 **H**AVE mercy on me, O God, have mercy on my heart is a soul that puts its  
 2 trust in thee, I will take refuge under the shelter of thy wings, till the morning  
 3 pass by. I will cry out to the most high God, the God who has ever bathed

can: may he send aid now from heaven to deliver me, and bring confusion on my  
opponents; his mercy, his faithfulness be my speed! Fallen among thine I, thou  
humbly see man's flesh: thou art wiser than thou deeper than space or  
depth, compass deeper as my need. O God, mount high above the heavens, till  
thy glory overclouds the whole earth. See what they have laid a snare for my  
feet, to bring me low, dig a pit in my path; may it be their own undoing! A trap  
beneath my feet, a heart true to thy word; he sing, its music are for thee! Praise,  
all my staff, make, voices of harp and viol; down shall find me mornings: so will  
I give thee thanks, Lord, for all the world to hear it, sing praises while the  
Garden flows, of thy mercy, depths heaven high, of thy faithfulness, that reaches  
to the clouds. O God, mount high above the heavens, till thy glory overclouds  
the whole earth.

## PSALM 37

(To the choir-masters. Melody: Do not destroy. Cf David. A psalm.)

What all, are they human words you utter? And you, common folk, do you  
make just reward? You have you devised treachery in your hearts, and are in  
the land nothing but oppressors! Sinners that left the world only to get a-murdering,  
murders and have their mothers bear them. They are venomous as serpents,  
as the asp that stings a deaf ear: and will not listen to the maker-shower's music,  
skilled players though he be. My God, break their great dogs! Lord, shatter  
their jaw, strong as the jaws of lions. Like spilt water let them run to waste,  
shoot gone but harmless arrows: such are nothing, the world's way, perish  
like the untimely hawk that sees never the light of the sun. Green rolls the wide  
world under away, while powder pot still waits the foe! The innocent that will  
triumph at the sight of their punishment, as he dips his hands in the blood of the  
evil-doers. Sure enough, men will say, innocent has its reward, sure enough,  
there is a God who judges sinners here on earth.

## PSALM 38

(To the choir-masters. Melody: Do not destroy. Cf David. A psalm. When Saul  
had his heart watched, so as to put him to death.)

O Lord, deliver me from my enemies, rescue me from their snares; though  
thy treacherous designs, shattered their last the blood. See how they plot  
against my life, how strong is their confidence! Yet never, Lord, through any  
fault or offence of mine: unprovoked, they rush to the attack. Beak thyself, come  
in on my side and witness me wronged. Lord of hosts, God of Israel, render a world  
to justice, and show the treachery no mercy. See how they come back at night-  
fall, like yelping dogs, to prow about the city! Tongues that boast, lips that roll,  
as if none could hear them: and all the while thou, Lord, makest light of them.  
Thou, in whose esteem all the nations are as nothing. To thee I look, the God  
who rescuest me, the God who render over me, my God, and all my hope  
of mercy.

With thee alone, my God, I triumph over my enemies. Smile down, my God,  
before they compass the overthrow of my people; for thou knowest of their  
evils and crush them, my goodness, my Mercies! Shown with the guilty in  
tongues, the boastful lips let their own poison poison them, their cunning and their  
lies. Brayers, makers in the vengeance, overhauling them, show them: that is  
there is a God who rules over Jacob, rules over the utmost ends of the earth. Back to  
come they at nightfall, like yelping dogs, and prow about the city, he and wife in

they will roam in search of their prey, and snarl with rage when they go unled at their prey. And I, too long, will be proclaiming thy greatness, will be triumphing in the mercy thou hast shown me, thou, my stronghold and my refuge in my hour of peril. To thee I will sing, O God who strengthen me, O God who restore over me, my God, and all my hope of mercy.

## PSALM 55

(To the choir-master, Melody: Lily of the Lev. A psalm. Of David. To be sung for the festival. This was when he searched against the Syrians of Nobabim and Ishba, and took on his way home defeated the men of Ishba in the Valley of Sale, twelve thousand of them.)

**T**hen long, O God, hast thou distressed us, and hastened our sorrows in flight; a cry went forth, and bring us back to our own. Hark the wounds of the land: thou hast thinned and torn our people, the land thou troublest still. Hark the borders thou dost lay on us, such a deluge thou dost send for us at break of dawn: a rout. How now thou hast set up a standard to rally our faithful servants, and to protect them from the archers' many war-bows and in the men thou lovest, give our power arrows, and lift thy right hand to save.

O God's word came to us from his sanctuary, in triumph I will divide up Sichem, and parcel out the valley of Tabor to my Chanaan, some Massas belongs, Ephraim is in my hand, Ieda the staff I bear. Now friends, too, shall be my deluge, even as Ishba. I will claim my rights, I will lead the Philistines away in triumph. Such was the music that rose when it is that set us on my march against his fortress, when it is to Judah answers for me here Ishba, when thou, O God, hast distressed us, and as with you go into battle with our arrows? It is thou that must deliver us from peril: it is thou in the help of man. Only through God can we fight victoriously, only he can triumph our opponents in the dust.

## PSALM 60

(To the choir-master, For stringed instruments. Of David.)

**L**isten, Lord, to this cry of appeal, do not let my prayer go unheard, though I rise to leave the ends of the earth that I call upon thee. When my heart sighs for thee, thou wilt let me high up on a rock, thou wilt bring me rapine, thou, my joy: hope, my strong tower against the assault of my enemies. Oh let me dwell for ever in thy sanctuary, let me take refuge under the shelter of thy wings! Lord, thou hast listened to my prayer, a domain thou hast given me where thy name is held in awe. Year upon year do thou add to the king's reign; while generations come and go, may his life still last. For ever may he reign under God's favour: to eternity and his kingdom be his name. Aloudly I will sing thy praises, thy altar thy perform my vows.

## PSALM 61

(To the choir-master, Melody: Michan. A psalm. Of David.)

**N**o one has my soul but in God's hands; to him I look for deliverance. I have no other stronghold, no other deliverer but him who in his goodness, I fear me chiefly fail. Still one man my enemies single out for their onslaught, one crying lodge in refuge: will mine eyes be overthrown, from my safe haven they would take deluge me, ready here that speak me false, but ever with a curse in

their hearts. Yet even now, my soul, leave yourself in God's hands; all my trust is in him. He is my stronghold and my deliverer, my protector, hiding me from sinners. God is all my defence and all my hope; my rock-saviour, my refuge is in God. Therefore, put your reliance in him, and lay the homage of your hearts on his feet; God is our deliverer.

There is a battle that goes on in Adam's soul: there is no truth, light in the night as they rise, weighed all together and lighter than a breath. But your faith is stronger; no more, know no more of glancing; no longer your hand on wavering rock of sinners. Not more, but rather I have heard God's voice of warning; all power is in God's. To thee, Lord, every tongue shall give praise every man the reward is of his deeds.

## PSALM 62

(A psalm. Of David. This was when he was in the desert of Juda.)

Now, then let my God, how eager my quest for thee, body without and soul longing for thee, like rose parched with thirst, where stream is none! So in the holy place, I contemplate thee, ready for the revelation of thy greatness, thy glory. To worship before is dearer to me than life itself; my soul of justice can no more be withheld. So, all my life long, I will bless thee, holding up my hands in honour of thy name; my heart flows, as with some rich fount, my mouth, in joyful words, singing thy praise. My thoughts shall go out to thee as dawn, as I lie awake contemplating thee, and the protection thou hast given me. Gladly I take shelter under thy wings, cling close to thee, borne up by thy protecting hand. In vain do my enemies plot against my life, even so be swallowed up in the depths of earth, a prey to the sword, victims for justice! The king shall triumph in God's protection, blessed as they are ever blessed who take their refuge in his name; silence shall fall on the lips that uttered treason.

## PSALM 63

(To the chief-singer. A psalm. Of David.)

Now, then in my prayer when I plead with thee, save me from the clutches of my mortal foe. Those to defend me from sin conspiracy of malice, this throng of evil-doers; the tongue that would like a sharpened sword, the poisoned words aimed at me, like arrows. Doubtless they attack the innocent; surely, they are safe notwithstanding, they wound him. Are thou pledged to us a faithful saviour, plotting to lay snares for me, sure that they will go untried! With what care they hatch their designs, planning treason double-dyed! Let the thoughts of man's heart be deep as they will, yet God has power, too, to smite a man with sudden wounds to deal shame; all their conspiring plots turn false. Fearfully the calumniators shake their heads, awe-stricken every one; who but will ascribe God's power, who but will praise his great acts? Honour now will replace us and yet their trust in the Lord, upright hearts will not blush to raise.

## PSALM 64

(To the chief-singer. A psalm. Of David. A song.)

Now, then shall not have praise to thee so close be the vow he paid, heart of prayer. To thee all mankind must look for pardon, weighed down by its wickedness till they dare forgive. Wound the man on whom thy justice falls, whose

1 show them: to dwell with thee in thy own domain! Fill these hearts with love of  
 2 thy house, with awe of thy holy temple. Wonderful the miracles thou doest  
 when in secret thou dost hear us, O God our fortress, at the bounds of earth, far  
 3 over the sea, is thus we hope. What power girds thee about in thy strength  
 4 the mountains stand firm; thou dost rule the raging of the sea, raging  
 5 before us, ay, and the tumult of angry nations. Thy power shall make us as the  
 6 world's end, fill the lands of mariners and nations with awe. And now thou  
 7 hast brought relief to this land of ours, hast weened and greatly enriched in deep  
 8 flows the channel whence thy distant providence grows us food, long time thou  
 9 dost prepare it, watering the furrows, loosening the clods, multiplying the grain.  
 10 Thy bounty is it that covers the year; when thy feet have passed, the stream of  
 11 plenty flows down through the desert pastures, all all the hill-sides are gaily  
 12 clad, heath through the fields, and the valleys stand deep in corn; the shout of joy  
 everywhere, everywhere the hymn of praise.

## PSALM 66

(To the choir-master. A song. A psalm.)

1 Let the whole world busy holding in God's presence, sing praise to his name.  
 2 Let us sing praise to his glory! Cry out to God, What should, Lord, thy awe inspire?  
 How great is that might of thine, which makes the mountains collapse before thee!  
 3 Let the whole world worship thee, sing of thee, sing praise to thy name. Come  
 4 now, and see what God does, how wonderful he is in his dealings with human  
 5 kind, how he raises the sea into land, and lets seas cross a firm dry-land; ours  
 6 is praise in his mercy. In that power of his he ridges the seas, and has cry for  
 7 what the Gentiles do, let ourselves make some thank praise. Bless the name of our  
 8 God, you Gentiles, echo the sound of his praise.  
 9 God's will in us should live yet; he does not suffer our steps to falter. Yes,  
 10 Lord, thou hast put us in the proud, raised us as men and slaves in the day, led us  
 11 into a snare, and turned our backs with trouble, while human nations rode as  
 12 down our way led through fire and water, yet in the end thou hast granted us  
 13 relief. See, I come into thy house with burnt-offerings, to pay thee all the vows  
 14 whose lips have framed, this mouth has uttered, when Gentile nations spoke me. For  
 15 burnt-offerings of sheep shall be thine, and the sacrifice of man's beasts and birds  
 16 and goats shall be thy portion. Come and give me, all you who worship God, while I  
 17 tell of the great marvels he has done: may, how this voice of mine stand out to him,  
 18 that tongue old men know. Would God hear to me, if my heart were set on  
 19 wrong? And God has listened to me, given heed to my cry for succour. Blessed  
 20 be God, who does me: relief my prayer, does not withhold his mercy from me.

## PSALM 66

(To the choir-master. For stringed instruments. A psalm. A song.)

1 **M**AY God be merciful to us, and bless us: may he guide us as the horns of his  
 2 horns. Make known thy will, O God, wide as earth makes known among all  
 3 nations thy saving power. Honour to thee, O God, from the nations, hence from  
 4 all the nations! The Gentiles, too, may rejoice and be glad: a whole world shatters  
 5 thy judgement, and the Gentiles, too, obey as earth thy sovereignty. Honour  
 6 to thee, O God, from the nations, hence from all the nations! The Lord has  
 7 yielded his harvest: such bounty God, our own God, all-wise. God grant us ever  
 his blessing, and may earth, far and wide, do him devotion.



## PSALM 87

(To the choir-masters. Of David. A psalm. A song.)

**L**et God testify himself, surely soon: he does he prospered, their justice tall: 1  
 might before his coming. Voweth the witness at God's presence as the smoke 2  
 rises, as your souls at the fire: while the just keep holding and rejoice at the 3  
 sight of him, glad and content. Sing, then, in God's house; praise his name with 4  
 a psalm, a royal psalm: through the wilderness for the God whose name is just!  
 Triumph in his presence; he is a father to the captain, and gives the widow 5  
 refuge, this God who dwells apart in holiness. This is the God who makes a 6  
 house for the widow, provides the orphan in a land of plenty, turns away but the  
 rebels to find their doom in the wilderness.

O God, when these shall go forth at the head of the people, on that moral pro- 7  
 gress of mine through the desert, how the earth shall, how the sky testify as God's, 8  
 coming, how even Sinai shall, when the God of Israel came! And on this day 9  
 our land, O God, shall render mine abundantly; all perched is firm, and thou  
 dost bring it forth. Paramount of thy own faith, and shoulder there are none 10  
 to whom thou perdest here, O God, for thy persistence!

Word has come from the Lord, good news borne on a multitude of fire: 11  
 Roused the kings, roused their armies, they have felt their spells for humankind to 12  
 carry away: never shall thou so high as a dove's feather, never shall to this 13  
 on a dove's wings and you, all the while, passing quiet among the steep-folds!  
 While led the waters of Jordan, when the Lord put kings to rest.

Israel's hills are high, Israel's hills are rugged: near you run your eyes, rugged 14  
 hills, remains God's mountain, and every when you see! The mountain where God 15  
 lives, and will ever live to dwell. See where God comes, with chaotic tumult: 16  
 still for his report downwards open thousands come from Sinai to this his sac-  
 ruary. Then down comes up on high, then dost capture thy spirit, and now come 17  
 to thy fortress; will they or no, your faith must have the Lord God for their  
 neighbour. Blessed be the Lord now and ever, the God who bears our burden, 18  
 and won on the victory. Our God is a God of deliverance; just is a Lord who is  
 save from pain of death. God will make the heads of his enemies, make the 19  
 proud heads of the men, who live in rage in their wickedness. I will rescue my 20  
 people, the Lord says; I will rescue them to their land, from Egypt, from the  
 shore of the high sea. Some the blood of the enemies will stain thy feet, cover a 21  
 land that follows them but shall hide its men. They come, O God, a mark for 22  
 all eyes to come, thy God and thy king, to visit his sanctuary. Before him go the 23  
 singers, and the minstrel follows, while the maid play to their mistress before:  
 Give praise to the Lord God in his infinite assembly, sons of Israel. There is Hos- 24  
 pitality, plangency of the tribes, that nations in the sea; here are the children  
 of Juda with the companion, Chelbana, too, from Ephraim, Chelbana from  
 Naphtali.

When they praise, O God, shall thy Divine power, perfect thy own achievement in 25  
 among us: so honour thy temple in Jerusalem, kings shall bring gifts before thee. 26  
 Thus the wild beasts of the desert, these bulls that feed it over the powerful 27  
 head of nations; down fall they, bringing where peace for their names. Scatter  
 the nations that delight in war, all Egypt: rends their hair plumes, all Ethiopia is  
 makes her praise with God. Kingdoms of the earth, raise your voices in God's 28  
 house, sing a psalm to the Lord; a psalm to God, who dwells on the heavens, in

in the immaterial heaven, and raises his soul in a voice of thunder: For because in God, the God whose splendour runs over Israel, who holds dominion high in among the clouds. Are devils above him in his holy place? The God of Israel gives his people strength and courage, blessed be God!

## PSALM 49

(To the choir-master. Melody: The Lilies Of David.)

O God, save me, for how the waves above above me, shoulder-high! I am like one who sinks fast in deep mire, with no ground under his feet, one who has ventured out into mid-sea, to be drowned by the surge. Hinder my flock with crying woe! For help, my eyes seek with looking up the glory in my God. Countless as the hairs on my head are my wrongs, mistakes, I am no match for the oppressor that wrongs me. Should I make mistake in doing, I, that were rebuked a dozen! O God, show favour: my justice, no fault of mine is hidden from thy sight. Master, Lord of kings, shall all forms of sin being shown to those who are just in them, make men repeat of looking for aid to thee, the God of Israel? It is for thy sake that I have not with reproach, that I have not often blushed with confusion, no contempt among my own brethren, a stranger to my own mother's children to me. Was it not favour for the honour of thy house that consumed me, was it not favour against thee, the oppressor I fear?

What more could I do? I hesitated myself before them by fasting, and that, too, it was water for feeding flesh. I fasted in weakness, and they made my word of power. When in the market-place meet me, the fools make a song of me and so they win. To thee, Lord, I make my prayer: never man more needed thy good will. Listen to me, O God, full of mercy as thou art, heeded as thou art to thy people of old. Save me from sinking in the mire, rescue me from my enemies, as from the deep waters that surround me. Let me not sink under the flood, need I bowed up in his depths, and the wolf's mouth close above me. Listen to me, Lord, of thy goodness merry, look down upon me in the abundance of thy love. Do not turn thy face away from thy servant in this time of trouble, give a speedy answer to my prayer. Down now is my distress, and great deliverance before me, as I stand pressed by my enemies. Lord, then knowest how they oppress me, how I think with shame; thou dost how many are my persecutors. Hasten forth with that shame, I flee away, looking round for pity, where pity is gone, for comfort, where there is no comfort to be found. They were no gall to me, and when I was in misery they gave me vinegar to drink. Let their heat be turned into a fire, a hot fire to catch them and destroy, even the lifted eye be shown, over the halting man. Pour out thy anger upon them, let there be vengeance by the tide of the vengeance, as for their shedding blood be deserved, their sins for ever unatoned. Who is it they persecute? A man already afflicted by their hand was my heart so torn, and as thou have added to it. Do thou add guilt to guilt in their reckoning: let there be never shame thy people, let their names be blotted out from the record of the living, and never be written among the just.

See how bloodless I am, and how distressed! For thy help, O God, restrain me, as I will sing in praise of God's name, herald it generally, a more complete testimony, this, to the Lord than my young bullock, for all its power of horn and its hoof. What is a sign to make the afflicted rejoice in those men's spirits in their quest for God. The Lord shows to the perfect the dedication he does not forget in his servants in their chains. To him be praise from sky, earth and sea, and there is all the creature that moves about them. God will great deliverance to them, the

claim of Jude will rise from their ruin, isolated and held firmly in possession, an inheritance for the race that serves him, a home for all true lovers of his or mine.

## PSALM 68

(To the chief-musician, Of David. A commendation.)

**D**RAW, O God, to me the first! Look, make haste to help me. Dispel the 1  
 them, get them to the flesh, the enemies who plot against my life! Scatter 2  
 let them go their way, that retire over my afflictions; that away in confusion, 3  
 that covered over me in loath! Triumph: let be them, who long for thee; 4  
 Praise to the Lord, be ever their song, who look eagerly now for thy rescue. 5  
 There went our helpers and deliverers thy God, thy God, thy God. There art my champion 6  
 and my deliverer; Lord, do not delay thy coming.

## PSALM 70

**T**HO thou, O God, I turn for rescue, may I never be disappointed! Rescue and 1  
 deliver me, faithful as thou art hast to my cry for rescue. Let me find 2  
 in thee a refuge-house, a shelter of defence; I have no other stronghold, no other 3  
 refuge, but thee. Rescue me, Lord, from the power of the wicked, from the 4  
 grasp of hellishness and oppression: show me God and Mercy, the hope and 5  
 confidence of my youth. Thou hast upheld me from birth, thou hast guarded me 6  
 ever since I left my mother's womb; ever is thou was my trust. Men stare at me 7  
 now as a strange person, to signal the perdition thou hast given me. And even 8  
 mine praise was on my lips, thy constant theme thy glory.

Do not cast me off now, in my old age; slowly my strength dies, do not leave 1  
 forsake me. A mark thou hast set me for curious eyes and tongues; they conspire in 2  
 evilness, and whisper, God has abandoned him; now is the time to overturn and to 3  
 cast him; no one can bring him rescue now. O God, do not keep thy silence as 4  
 thou may harm me, my God, be aid me. Defeat their plot against my life, and bring it 5  
 to nothing; smite my afflictions with confusion and shame.

Still will I hope on, praying thee ever more and more. Day in, day out, thou to 1  
 thy staff still tell of thy faithfulness, of thy saving power, and lead us on to thee, 2  
 thy divine wonders, thy matchless deeds, Lord, proclaim. It is thou, O God, 3  
 that hast inspired me ever since the days of my youth, and still I am found 4  
 telling the tale of thy wonders. O God, do not fail me, now when I am old 5  
 and grey-headed, till I have made known the power of thy power to all, to all 6  
 the generations that will follow, the faithfulness of thee which makes up, O 7  
 God, to the heavens, so dignify mine creature. There is none like thee, O God, 8  
 none like thee. Ah, how often thou hast troubled me with bitter trouble! And 9  
 still thou restore mine, and give me back life, and bring me up again from the 10  
 very depths of the earth. Lift up thy hand high, turn back, and comfort me. So true 11  
 is thy word, and still I can give thee thanks with psalm-songs, praise thee on the 12  
 harp, O God, the Holy One of Israel! Gladly these lips will sing of thee, this heart, in 13  
 which none thou art deliverance. Day in, day out, I will repeat the story of thy 14  
 faithfulness, what shame will, what confusion, on the man who sought to wrong 15

PSALM 73

(Of Solomon)

- 1 **G**aze on the king, O God, thy eyes shall be judgments; the behavior of a  
2 throne, may be to sit, as thou art just; may be give the people right orders,  
3 and to thy poor, rebuke. Such the heavy his rebuke shall stop, power on every  
4 mountain, justice on every hill-side. Wink and word he will keep over the proud-  
5 less, prove the children of the poor, not crush the oppressor. Anger as sin or  
6 sin as he shall rebuke, easily as the rain that drenches the meadow grass, as the  
7 showers that water the earth. Justice in his days shall thrive, and the blessings  
8 of justice, and many these days long till the moon shines no more.
- 9 From sea to sea, from the great river to the ends of earth, his way shall reach.  
10 In his presence shall be heard the waves, all his enemies will be bound in the  
11 darts; gifts shall flow in from the ends of Taurus and the mountains, rebuke drop  
12 the kings of Arabia and of Saba, all kings must needs bring their homage, all  
13 nations serve him. He will give the poor rebuke, when they cry to him, rebuke  
14 him, with many rebuked things; in their need and helplessness, they shall have  
15 his compassion. Thus does he will take care for keeping, not those free from the  
16 chains of misery and oppression, clearly arrange their lives. Long life shall be his,  
and gold from Arabia shall be given him; sure will pay for him continually, that  
17 his name overruns. The land shall have good store of corn, high up the hill-sides,  
reaching like the woods of Lebanon; shall multiply its children, like grass on the  
18 ground. For ever let his name be worthy blessing, a name to endure while the sun  
gives light to him; all the rulers of the earth shall be amazed, all the nations shall  
20 adore him.
- 21 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who does wonderful deeds in secret, who,  
22 and without his name be his glorious name; all the earth shall be filled with his  
glory, Amen, Amen.

PSALM 73

(A psalm, Of Asaph.)

- 1 **W**HAT heavy God shows, what things beauty, in the temple, in the great  
2 of Israel! Yet I was near losing my foothold, till the ground sank under my  
3 steps, such down-falling had I as seeing the good things of sinners that stay his  
4 love, the more, more a pump healthy and sleek their bodies show. Not for those to  
5 show much content for of trouble; the plagues which often human kind will  
6 pass them by. No wonder if pride things to them like a nothing, if they think,  
7 the less sinners, their wrong-doing. From those purposed towns who make  
8 promise, when the sinners are punished. How looking, now talking nothing,  
9 turned on high they proudly looking, their chariot wheels heaven, and their  
10 like men who journey on earth.
- 11 Suddenly the mass of my own race took on, to see them drinking life's cup to  
12 the full. O God, they ask, be aware of this! Does the more high house of all  
13 as they perish? Look as those sinners, how they live at peace, how they are to grow-  
14 in wealth. Why then, thought I, is it in no purpose that I have kept my heart true, and  
15 myself my hands clean in pursuit of living? Well, all the while, I am plagued  
16 by it, and no morning comes but, my troubling is renewed. Was I to share their  
17 thoughts? Nay, that were to put the whole company of the children in the wrong.  
18 I am afraid to read the volume, how it proved a hard search, until I broke myself

in God's sanctuary, and considered, there, what becomes of each man at last. The truth is, those are making a slippery path for their feet, ready to plunge them in to ruin. In a moment they are fallen, in a storm of fervent rain and gale. And then, Lord, dost rise up and break with all their imaginings, as a waking to meet his dream.

What if our mind was full of blossoms, when I I was placed in the heart? I was in all darkness, I was all ignorant, standing there like a brute beast in thy ill presence. Yet ever thou art at my side, ever hastened me by thy right hand. Thine art to guide me with thy counsel, thine to welcome me into glory at last. What art that door heaven held for me, but thyself? What charm for me has earth, here at thy side? This frame, this earthly being of mine must come to an end with God as will heavy laden's stronghold, strongly my deliverance. Let those others may be, or mine desert thy arms, but not all those who break their neck with thee; I know as no other content but clinging to God, putting my trust in the Lord, my Master; within the gate of royal bliss I will be the herald of thy praise.

## PSALM 73

(A psalm of Asaph.)

O now, hast thou altogether abandoned us? Sheep of the oven perishing, must we find the fire of thy vengeance? Behold them of the company thou hast gathered, long ago of the tribes thou hast chosen to be thy own dwelling of peace and bliss, where thou hast thy dwelling-place. Mark how thy steps, where all is ruin irreparable, see what havoc thy anger has wrought in the holy place, how their malice has reared in thy way perdition, setting up its emblem for a trophy of conquest. How often blow, the woodmen in the forest, they have girded their axes, brought in down, with pick and mallet, to the ground. They have set fire to thy sanctuary, defiled the dwelling-place of thy glory in the dust. They think to destroy as the one man, sweep away every shrine of God in the land. Our own evil-doers are confident to be seen; there are no prophets left now, none; you will have long we must endure. O God, shall our heavy sin at everlastingly, or shall blasphemy still defy thy name? Why dost thou withhold thy hand? That right hand of thine, must it always be idle in thy bosom?

How is a King who reigned before thou was born on earth he was the means of so bring deliverance. What power has thou could master the shifting sea, could it the power of the monster beneath its waters, shake Leviathan's power, and give to him up as prey to the sea-monster? Then didst open up fountains and streams of so water thou, too, madest the swollen rivers run dry. Thine is the day, thou the night; moon and sun are of thy appointment: thou hast fixed all the bounds of earth, madest the morning, madest the east of the year.

With thou take us back, when thy enemies trust thee, and in their wickedness set on the name of Jeshu as deliverance? Must the dove be the refugee's prey? Souls are subordinated, but for thee, with thou love us quite forgotten! Behold them of the is covetous; everywhere oppression rules, as wolves openly through the fields. Do it not let the humble go away disappointed, break the poor and the helpless to snail thy name. Again I beseech, O God, to rebuke thy own enemy; do not forget the 12 thunders which righteous men hurl at thee, day after day: do not overlook them, the 12 triumphant shouts of thy enemies, the ever growing danger that have defied thee.

## PSALM 76

(To the choir-masters. Melody: Do not destroy. A psalm. Of Asaph. A song.)

1 **W**hen praise thee, O God, and, praising thee, tell upon thy name, tell the story  
 2 of thy wondrous deeds. When the time is ripe, I will judge rightly, with  
 3 pride to be full, and all that dwell on it; I shall support its fabric. Nailed no more,  
 4 I cry to the rebels, Avenge your pride, to the transgressors: would they match  
 5 themselves against the most High, best defiance to God? Look on, look on,  
 6 it will avail you nothing, no help comes from the desert, or the high hills. It is  
 7 God who rules all, humbling one man, and exalting another. In the Lord's hand  
 8 lies a full cup of spiced wine; he holds it to men's lips, that must empty it  
 9 in the drink, whence everywhere must drink come. Whomsoever will I triumph,  
 10 in singing praise to the God of Jacob; mine to crush the pride of every siner,  
 11 and raise high the courage of the just.

## PSALM 78

(To the choir-masters. For stringed instruments. A psalm. Of Asaph. A song.)

1 **I**t is in Jacob God makes himself known, is loved: that his name is exalted;  
 2 silent, in silence, he makes his abode, dwells in Zion. It was there he broke the  
 3 archer's bulwarks, broke shield, and sword, and hurle away. How proudly was  
 4 the dwelling over the everlasting hills! How's beams, fold of their power,  
 5 they shed their long sleep; lay them, no hand starting, the warriors in their pride;  
 6 by them, chambers and lawrens, overthrown, God of Jacob, at thy word of  
 7 rebuke.  
 8 Who can raise thee, so terrible, so sudden in thy anger? Loud rings is heaven  
 9 in the dinous thine utterance; earth trembles and is dumb: when God raises himself  
 10 to smite his enemies, giving rebuke to those who are scorned on earth. His  
 11 statutes tested, Edom shall do thee honour; to thee the spread banners of Elam  
 12 shall leap holiday. To thee Lord your God let every be made and praise bring gifts  
 13 of flesh, every side to God, the mighty, for it is thou casts the hearts of princes, fearful  
 14 among all the kings of the earth.

## PSALM 79

(To the choir-masters. Melody: Nations. Of Asaph. A psalm.)

1 **A** cry to my God in loud appeal, a cry to my God, to win his hearing! To the  
 2 Lord I look whose dews comes upon me; in his presence I lift up my hands;  
 3 until the darkness, never completely gone like mine there is no comforting. O God  
 4 I trouble me, not signing with, of God I moan, yet ever thin-hearted. Sleepless  
 5 that thought holds me not bewitched and dumb. I reflect upon days long past,  
 6 the lamentational tears powers my mind: deep musings occupy my thoughts as  
 7 midnight, never will my mind be at rest. Can it be that that will always leave as  
 8 darkness, will never show us again his old kindness? Can his favour desert us  
 9 altogether, his promise be so made nullified? Can God forget to be gracious, one  
 10 in anger never him to withhold his mercy? For me, I tell myself, this sorrow was  
 11 removed the sign (high has showed the ladies of his dealings with man.  
 12 To restoration of the Lord has come, to recall those wonderful acts of mine,  
 13 as long ago. To ponder over all the doings, pass the wonders in review! Thy  
 14 is praise, O God, is lodged about with holiness: what god is great as our God is

great. Thy own wonderful acts outshone the Deities even as the Gossamer shows it  
wouldst make thy power known, by showing them to wit how thy might, the  
name of Jacob and of Joseph. The waters saw thee, O God, the waters trembled  
at the sight of thee, moved to their inmost depths; how the waves roared, how  
the clouds rolled rain, when waters from their gates! To and fro thy waves  
passed, thy crashing thunder rolled, till all the world shone with thy lightning, to  
and the troubled earth shook. Thy way led through the sea, the deep tide made  
a road for thee, and none may cross the waters of thy passage, where thou, with  
Moses and Aaron for thy shepherds, didst bring thy people out on their journey.

## PSALM 77

(A psalm. Of Asaph.)

**L**ORD, my people, to this moment of mine, do not turn a deaf ear to the  
Laments I utter. I speak to you with experience for my people, read the annals of  
long ago. It is a story often heard, well known among my brethren; our fathers  
told it to us. And shall we keep it back from their children, from the generation  
which followed? Speak we of God's power, of his great power, of the wonderful  
deeds he did. He gave Jacob a rule to live by, firmest the Lord a law, com-  
manding our fathers to stand on the margin, so that a new generation might  
learn it; none would be born to take their place, and teach it to their own sons  
after them. They were to put their trust in God, ever remembering his divine  
dealings with them, ever loyal to his commandments. They were not to let like their  
fathers, a stubborn and defiant breed, a generation of false show, of a spirit that  
tried to fight with God.

So it was that the sons of Ephraim, how is that, were turned in the day of  
trouble. They were false to God's command, refused to follow his law, as if they  
had forgotten all his mercies, all those wonderful deeds of his they had witnessed.  
Had not their fathers seen wonders enough in Egypt, on the plains of Tush, to  
when he passed the sea to let them pass through it, making its waters stand firm  
as a mound of earth, when he led them with a cloud by day, with glowing fire all  
through the night? He pierced the rock, too, in the desert, and started their thirst;  
as it from some deep pool, bidding the very rocks yield water, till desolation  
was gazed from them, abundant as rivers.

And still they went on offending him, done in the wilderness, rebelling against  
the most High, challenging God in their thoughts to give them the food they  
craved for. Evidently they asked, Can God opened a window for us in the wilderness  
in Tush, he smote the rock, and made water flow from it, all the stream ran in flood,  
to let us be given bread too, and provide meat for his people? All this the Lord  
is heard, and his indignation blazed out; his punishing them Jacob had felt, his  
arm must break on Israel. What, had they no faith in God, no trust in his power to  
save? He laid his command upon the clouds above them, gave open the doors  
of heaven, and sent down manna for them to eat. The bread of heaven was his  
gift to them; meat should eat the food of angels, and as their way should be  
supplied abundantly. Here, he commanded his ear-wind from the sky, to blow the  
top of the western gate, sending down meat on them that as dust, birds on the  
wing, plentiful as the sea-eel. How their very camp is full, close about their  
tents, and their son, and took their fill. All they asked, he granted them; manna,  
to their craving was satisfied. But while the food was yet in their mouths, God's  
anger against them reached its height, and drew their hardness, brought them  
low, all the flower of Israel.

Yet, with all this, they continued to offend him; all his wonderful deeds left to

11 them hidings still. And ever he took away their lives instantly, turned their  
 12 lips to an end. When he threatened them with death, they would laugh after  
 13 him, but their need of God once came, they would remind themselves that it was  
 14 God who had protected them, his almighty power that had delivered them.  
 15 But still they were lying lips, they were false tongues that spoke to him: their  
 16 tongues were not true to him, no longer bound to his commands. Yet, such  
 17 is his mercy, he would still pardon their lies, and spare them from destruction  
 18 again and again to curb his indignation, to his vengeance would not give  
 19 place. He would not forget that they were flesh and blood, no better than a breath  
 20 of wind, that passed by and never returns. Now often the Jews saw them in  
 21 a crowd against him, how often, in those pilgrimages, they defied his anger. Always  
 22 over challenges to God's power, their ambitions against the Holy One of Israel.  
 23 Had their tongues all he did for them, that day when he set them free from the  
 24 grips of their oppression, all those victories among the sons of Egypt, those pos-  
 25 sesses in the plain of Tanis, when he turned all their streams, all their fountains  
 26 to one blood, so that they could not drink? He sent his fire, to their tents, flames  
 27 of living destruction on them, gave all their harvest over to the crickets, their  
 28 villages to the locusts, sent hail on their vineyards, frost on their orchards, trees,  
 29 in the full force of war with these wars, the lightning with their flocks. He let  
 30 his anger loose on them in all its violence; what rage, what fury, what wrath,  
 31 in the angels of destruction charged about them! So, the way made ready for  
 32 his vengeance, he took toll of their lives, doomed even their cattle to the peri-  
 33 cles, as even donkeys graze in Egypt, on the desolation of Israel in  
 34 all the dwellings of Chem, his cattle kill. Then, like a shepherd, he set his own  
 35 people on their way, led them, his own flock, through the wilderness, guided  
 36 them in safety, free from all alarm, while the sea closed over their enemy. So  
 37 he brought them to that holy land of his, the mountain slopes he took, with his  
 38 own right hand for them: so he drove out the heathen at their onset, panicked was  
 39 the land in them by his, to make his own inheritance, making the tribes of Israel  
 40 dwell where the heathen had dwelt before them.  
 41 These were the men who defied the most high God, and rebelled against him:  
 42 would not observe his decrees, but turned away and looked back with him as their  
 43 fathers had done. His a how then plays the ardent fire, made mountains shake,  
 44 to cover his anger, curved bowgates, to smite his judgment. The Lord broke  
 45 the tower of his, and turned back angles, cast Israel away in their scorn: he broke his  
 46 tabernacle in fire, the tabernacle where went he down among men. Plunder,  
 47 now, in the enemy's hands, the ark that is statue of his strength and victory;  
 48 he would leave his people at the mercy of the sword, divide his own inheritance.  
 49 Their young men fed the flames, and the maidens went to weave, their persons  
 50 fed by the sword, and never a widow left to mourn her death.  
 51 Then suddenly, like a man that wakes up from sleep, like some warrior that  
 52 lay, till now, oppressed with wine, the Lord raised himself: he smote his enemies  
 53 as they turned to flee, humbled them for ever with stones. Now he collected, now,  
 54 to make his dwelling with Joseph, it was not the tribe of Ephraim he would  
 55 choose: he chose the tribe of Judah, and the hill of Zion, there to breed his lion.  
 56 And there he built his sanctuary, inviolable as heaven or earth, his own  
 57 changing habitation. He chose David, now, for his dwelling made him away from  
 58 his dwelling the sheep: he made him leave all following the ewe that went in milk, and  
 59 to be the shepherd of Jacob's sons, his own people, of Israel, his own domain. His  
 60 was the Lord that they should read them, his the oldest heart that should be  
 61 their guide.



## PSALM 78

(A psalm. Of Asaph.)

**O** God, the heathen have broken into the inheritance; they have profaned the temple, they sanctuary, and left Jerusalem in ruins. They have chosen the corners of the heavens to feed all the birds of heaven; wild beasts prey on the carcasses of the fawn; blood has flowed like water on every side of Jerusalem, and there was none to bury the dead. What a triumph was this for the nations that dwell around us; how have our neighbours mocked and derided us! Lord, must we always turn thy vengeance, must thy jealous anger still have vengeance? Fear not this indignation of thine upon the nations that do not acknowledge thee, as the Magicians that grew wiser thy name; nor how they have made fools their prey, and left his dwelling-place in ruins! Forget the long remembrance of our sin, and haste in mercy to our side; never was need to see us this.

O God, our Saviour, help us deliver us, Lord, for the glory of thy name, praise us this for the sake of thy own renown! Shall the heathen ask, What has become of their God? Shall our eyes never witness thy vengeance upon the Gentiles, that upon vengeance there will rise for the servants' blood? Could not the groaning of the captive reach thy presence? Thy arm has not lost its strength from our hands deliver us, a new deliverance to us. Fear our enemies' malice from the lips of our neighbours, for all the iniquity, Lord, which they have put upon thee; and we, thy own people, sheep of thy pasture, will give thee thanks for ever, to thee, from one generation to the next, for every of thy wonders.

## PSALM 79

(To the choir-master. Melody: The Lily of the Levit. Of Asaph. A psalm.)

**G**ive audience, thou that art the gods of Israel, that hearest Joseph with a shepherd's ear. Thou who art enthroned above the Cherubim, reveal thyself to Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasse; even thy sovereign monarch, and come to our aid. O God, rescue us to our own smile upon us, and we shall find deliverance. Lord God of hosts, wilt thou always turn away in anger from thy servant? grieve; daily wilt thou allow us, for food, for drink, only the fall measure of our grain? Thou hast made us a scorned prize to our neighbours, scorned made us to all round us. O God of hosts, rescue us to our own smile upon us, and we shall find deliverance. Long ago, thou didst bring a vine out of Egypt, setting out the border of plant in Israel; thou didst prepare the way for its spreading, it and its fruit grew where thou hast planted it, filled the whole land. How is overgrown the hills, how the cedars, divinely tall, were overtopped by its branches! It spread out its branches to the sea, its shoots as far as the great river. Why is it that in those days thou hast levelled its wall, for every passer-by to ask it of its fruit? Nay have the wild beasts preyed on, have its grapes rotted to every beast that is named? God of hosts, what, look down from heaven, look to this vine, that needs in thy care. Restore the stock which thy own hand has planted, branches that thy hand has sown, and sown for thee. Death be in thy power for the man that have set out its down and burned it. Thy chosen friends, a name by their thriving, and in showing thee them, O let thy hand protect them still! Mercifully we will never let us see thee, grant us life, and we will live only to glorify thy name. Lord God of hosts, rescue us to our own smile upon us, and we shall find deliverance.

## PSALM 80

(To the choir-master: Mizmôr; The Wikipseans. Of Asaph.)

1 I expect we all in honour of the God who aids us anytime with glimmers to the  
 2 God of Jacob. Ring psalteries, and tambours, from the harp, sweetly sounding,  
 3 and the shofar. A new month, and a full moon; blow the trumpet loud, to glad  
 4 our hearts! Duty demands it of Jacob; for God of Jacob has decreed it. Made  
 5 it a law for Joseph, when the day he left Egypt, and gained the harbor shore. In  
 6 a supper unknown the average date to this. I have raised his shoulder of the  
 7 burden, freed his hands from the slavery of the land. Such deliverance I brought,  
 8 what then, didst cry out to me in the misery, pain that anguish under a canopy  
 9 of cloud, and tossed thee at the Will of Belshazzar.

9 Give heed, my people, to this working of mine; Israel, wouldst thou not listen?  
 10 Then let no strange worship find a home with thee; never for thy faces be bowed  
 11 to an alien God. Am not I thy Lord thy God, I, who rescued thee from Egypt?  
 12 Open thy mouth wide, and thou shalt have thy fill. No I speak, but my people  
 13 would not listen; Israel went on unheeding. Oh I was fain to give their hand  
 14 to break the yoke, let them follow their own devices. Ah, if my people did but  
 15 listen to me! Did Israel but take me for their guide! How lightly, then, would  
 16 I bring their enemies low, make short their persecutions! The very men that were  
 17 once the Lord's enemies would be cringing at his feet; now, for ever, should be  
 18 at their destiny. Israel should have full rest of whom ye counsel them, and heavy  
 19 dripping from the rock to their heart's content.

## PSALM 81

(A psalm. Of Asaph.)

1 God, when he stands, the Ruler of all, among the rulers assembled, comes  
 2 downward to pronounce judgment on the rulers themselves! With you never  
 3 comes perverting justice, exposing the cause of the wicked! Come, give witness  
 4 in the year and the fifteenth, do right to the afflicted and the distressed: in you  
 5 rest and poverty both for deliverance, rescue them from the hand of wickedness.  
 6 For us, ignorant and unrepenting, they grope their way in darkness; we have  
 7 no guide as the pigs of earth! Gods you say, I myself have declared in disavowal  
 8 children, every one of you, of the most High; yet the clatter of musicals excite you,  
 9 you shall fall with the fall of human princes. Beate stayed, Lord, bring the world  
 10 to judgment; all the nations are thy own domain.

## PSALM 82

(A song. A psalm. Of Asaph.)

1 The silent, Lord, no longer. O God, do not keep still now, do not hold back  
 2 thy power! What tumult among the assembly how their voices lift to thy hearing!  
 3 They plot against thy people, compass the ruin of the men thou hast in thy keeping.  
 4 Come, they whisper, let us put an end to their sovereignty, so that the very name  
 5 of Israel will be remembered no more. All are agreed, all alike are changed in con-  
 6 sideration against thee; how Elisha has occupied, thou Israel! Moab, too, and  
 7 the Agarites; Gilead, Ammon and Amalek, the Philistines, and the folk that  
 8 dwell at Tyre. Even Asaph has made compasses over with them, made her old  
 9 to their children of Lot.

Do as thou wilt thou shalt to Madian, to Shinar and Jabin at the house of  
 Chous: the men who died at Eder, roared there like lions on the ground. May  
 their prisons burst as Oreb burst, and Zelu tear the doors of Zibor and Shiman.  
 In the doors of all their chiefs'ness. And did they think to make God's chosen  
 prison their spoil? My God, send them stumbling this way and that, like horses,  
 like steeds before the wind. See how the fire burns up the fether, how its flames  
 scorch the meadow-side! So let the fury of thy wrath scorch them, thy fury burning  
 them. Let their cheeks blacken crimson with shame. Look, till they come to see  
 the day of wrath: confusion and dismay be theirs for ever. No ever let them be  
 rescued and brought to nothing. All they, too, know the meaning of Jere's name,  
 acknowledge thee as the most high God, the Overlord of earth.

## PSALM 13

(To the choir-master. Melody: The Withered. Of the sons of Coss. A psalm.)

Lord of hosts, how I love thy dwelling-place! For the name of the Lord's  
 house, my soul faints with longing. The living God at his name my heart,  
 while being thrills with joy. Where else shalt the sparrow find a house, the  
 dove a nest for her brood, but at thy altar, Lord of hosts, our King and our God?  
 How blessed, Lord, are those who dwell in thy house! They will be ever praising  
 thee. How blessed is the man who finds his strength in thee! Where there are  
 hearts set on playthings, the parched earthen jars like a water-course at their  
 coming, now-dried by the heat of scorching sun. So, at each stage refreshed,  
 they will reach Zion, and have sight there of the God who is above all gods.

Lord of hosts, hear in my prayer; God of Israel, grant me audience! God,  
 even our protector, do not shirked us away, look favourably upon him whom  
 thou hast anointed! Willingly would I give a thousand of my days for one spent  
 in thy court! Willingly reach but the threshold of my God's house, so I might  
 dwell no more in the shade of sinners! But no-collapse, shield us protect us, the  
 Lord God has sworn, his honour to maintain. To maintain thou he will never relax  
 his favour. Lord of hosts, blessed is the man who puts his confidence in thee.

## PSALM 14

(To the choir-master. Of the sons of Coss. A psalm.)

Woe to those who say, We have blessed to this land of mine, receiving  
 of Jacob's blessing, profaning thy people's path, hurrying away the record of  
 their sin, all they hope reduced, thy house despoiled of its glory! And now, God  
 of our deliverance, do thou waken us; no longer let us see thy face. Wouldst  
 thou always be indignant with us? Must thy judgement smoulder on, age after  
 age? Will thou never relent, O God, and give fresh life, to rejoice the spirits  
 of thy people? Show us thy mercy, Lord, grant us thy deliverance!

Let me live, now, in the name of the Lord God; it is a message of peace  
 he sends to his people, to his loyal servants, that come back, now, with all their  
 heart to him. For us, his worshippers, deliverance is done at hand; in this  
 land of ours, the divine glory is to find a home. See, where mercy and faithful-  
 ness meet in one, how justice and peace are united in one richness! Faithfulness  
 grows up out of the earth, and truthfulness, richness looks down. The Lord, now,  
 is with grace to his blessing, to make our land yield its harvest; justice will go on  
 before him, deliverance follow where his feet tread.

## PSALM 85

(A prayer. Of David.)

1 **T**HANK thy me, Lord, and thank ye me in thy helplessness and my need. Praise  
 a life dedicated in thyself, make a service of those that praise his trust in thee.  
 2 In thee, my own God, have mercy, O Lord, for mercy I plead continually. com-  
 e fore the sinner's heart, this heart that sighs, Lord, to thee. Who is so kind and  
 a forgiving, Lord, as thou art, who so rich in mercy to all who trust in thee? Give a  
 3 blessing, then, Lord, to thy people, listen to my plea. When I cry out to thee in a  
 time of sore distress, counting on thy aidance. There is none like thee, Lord,  
 4 among the gods none can do as thou dost. Lord, all the nations thou hast made  
 do must needs praise and worship thee, hallowing thy name, so great thou art, so  
 marvelous in thy doings, thou who alone art God.  
 5 Guide me, Lord, thy own way, thy faithful was my resort, be all my heart's  
 a devotion overcast for thy name. O Lord my God, with all my heart I will  
 6 praise thee, everlastingly hold thy name in honour. For the greatness of thy mercy  
 7 thou hast showed me, in rescuing me thou from the lowest depths of hell. And  
 now, O God, see how scornful foes have set upon me, how their cruel con-  
 8 sidering threaten my life, with no thought of due to restrain it. But thou, Lord,  
 art a Lord of mercy and pity, patient, full of compassion, true in thy promise.  
 9 Look upon me and be merciful to my sinners, with thy sovereign aid, not without  
 10 another have him to thy service. Show me some token of thy favour for my  
 enemies are, dashed, how thou, Lord, dost help me, how thou, Lord, dost save  
 that me.

## PSALM 86

(Of the sons of Core. A psalm. A song.)

1 **H**Y own building under the Jordan hills, the Lord hear thee with power  
 2 His ear was ever open in Israel. How high a heart, city of God, is made for  
 3 thee, Mine it is to reckon the folk of Egypt, of Babylon, too, among my witness  
 4 Philistines, Tyrians, Arameans, all men claim thee as their Godhead. Mine  
 5 was ever thou, the power shall run, that did not take his birth from her; it was  
 6 the most High, none other, that founded her. This was their Godhead, the  
 7 Lord shall write upon the memorial of the nations: nor any but shall tell her  
 praise with song and dance, with dancing from her in every tongue.

## PSALM 87

(A song. A psalm. Of the sons of Core. To the choir-masters. Melody: Mahala.  
For singing. A staff. Of Heman the Kirshite.)

1 **P**RAISE God, day and night I am bound to thee, let my prayer reach thy  
 2 presence, give audience to my entreaty, for indeed my heart is full of trouble.  
 3 My life-time ever close to the grave, I count as one of those who go down, like  
 4 the stones, like men perished. As well lie among the dead, men laid low in the  
 5 grave, men close themselves up longer, cut away, now, from the protecting  
 6 hand. Such is the place where thou hast laid me, in a deep pit where the dark  
 7 waters swirl; heavily thy anger weighs down on me, and thou dost overwhelm me  
 8 with its full flood. Thou hast compassed all my acquaintance from me, so that  
 9 they treat me as a thing occurred; I lie in a prison whence there is no escape.

my eyes grow dim with tears. On that I call, so that stretch out my hands, each as day that passes.

Not for the dead thy wonderful power is shown, nor for pale shadows to return it and give them thanks. There is the grave, how shall they recount thy wonders? How shall they tell of thy faithfulness, now that life is gone? How can there be a sign of thy miracle in a world of darkness, of the fever in a land where all is forgotten? To praise, Lord, till I breathe is shall reach thee, while there is a yet time. Why dost thou reject my plea, Lord, and turn thy face away from me? How since youth, misery and mortal distress have been my lot; woe only I have to name thy visitations. I am overwhelmed with thy anger, dismayed by thy threats, it has cut me off like a flood, all at once surrounding me. Friends and neighbours gone, a world of shadows is all my company.

## PSALM 88

(A psalm. Of Heman the Ezrahite.)

**THIS** is a song to put the Lord's miracles on record for ever; ages will pass, and I shall these words of mine shall proclaim thy faithfulness. Chorus of voices: having mercy thy own lips have given; there, in the heavens, thy faithful promises rest: I have made a sworn covenant with my chosen servant David: To all time I will make thy promises sure, age after age I will tell thy chosen nation.

And are not these heavens, Lord, witnesses of thy wonderful power, of thy faithfulness, before the court of the holy ones? Who is there above the clouds to rival the Lord, where is the Lord's life among all the sons of God? How is God feared, in that assembly of the holy ones how great he is, how high is reverence above all that great above him! Lord God of hosts, who can compare with thee in the power, Lord, that is thine, in the faithfulness that everywhere attends thee? It is thou that dost curb the pride of the sea, and calm the tumult of its waves; it wounded like Rahab at thy feet, by the strong arm that has routed thy enemies. These are the heavens, thine the earth, nation; thou, of the world and all it holds. The word which said the world was of thy faithfulness thy name makes the glad the voices of Thine and Shema. God of the strong arm, the sure, the upright to hand, right and justice are the pillars of thy throne; mercy and faithfulness are to bonds of thy coming.

Happy is the people that knows well the show of praise, that thou, Lord, in is the smile of thy presence! Brethren they take pride in thy name, rejoice over it thy just dealings. What else but thy glory inspires their strength? What else but is thy favour tells us lift our heads? From the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, that is our protection comes which is our shield.

Long ago, in a vision, thou didst make a promise to thy faithful servant. Thou is mine, I have crowned you a warrior king, chosen me among the common folk a man to honour. How was my servant David on him my comforting oil has been poured. My hand shall arise have him unprotected, my arm shall give him courage; no enemy shall take him unaware, no nation shall have power, henceforth, to crush him; hasten down, every foe, at his cry, hallooed, all that it will, to thy faithfulness and mercy shall go with him; by my favour he shall rise to pre-eminence. I will make his power rise on the sea, on the streams of the great river at his hand shall march out. Thou art my Father, he will cry out to me, thou art my God, my stronghold and my refuge; and I will acknowledge him as my first-born, as created to all the kings of earth. I will console my favour towards him for ever, as my covenant with him shall remain unbroken; I will give him a promise that no ever fails, a throne enduring as heaven itself. Do his children forsake me now, or to follow paths not mine; do they violate my decrees, leave my will unlearn? Then is

- They shall feel the rod for their transgressions, I will scourge them for their sin,  
 14 but I will not cancel my gracious promise to him; never will I be guilty of so-  
 15 much iniquity, never will I violate my covenant, or alter the decree once spoken.  
 16 Pledged, thanks my everlasting word, I will never be false to David; his posterity  
 shall continue for ever, his royalty, too, shall last on in my presence like the sun;  
 17 as like the moon's eternal orb, that bears witness in heaven unchangeable.  
 18 And now! Now thou hast only longing; and soon for me, heavy thy load  
 19 will on him thus long sustained. Spurned lies the covenant thou shalt make  
 20 with thy servants, thou hast discontinued his royalty in the dust, besides shov-  
 21 el of the walls about him, and made a rule of his wasteland, all he is plundered  
 22 by every power-by, a laughing-stock to all his neighbours. Thou hast turned  
 23 him to the smiting arrow, a triumph to all his enemies. Felling the thrust of his  
 24 sword, and deeping him thy summer in battle. Thou hast ridged him of the  
 25 bright glory that once was his; thou hast cast down his throne to earth, out his  
 26 scattered there before his time; confusion overtake him.  
 27 Lo! with thee always runs the foot swift as oldenrod, will the flame of thy  
 28 anger never be quenched? Remember how (yet a thing I say, how brief a dream  
 29 as thou hast granted to all Adam's sons. Where is the man that can live on, and  
 30 never deem transient) can rescue his life from the power of the world beneath?  
 31 Lo! where are those warriors of an earlier time, promised so faithfully to David?  
 32 Remember how a world's tumults smelt thy people, and this now have more true  
 33 to them all; shall thy handmaids, Lord, those, thy women, after the man thou thy-  
 34 self hast married?  
 35 Renewed be the Lord for ever: Amen, Amen.

## PSALM 90

(A psalm of Moses, for use of God.)

- 1 **Y**OU, thou hast been our refuge from generation to generation. Before the  
 2 hills came to birth, before the whole frame of the world was suspended, thou  
 3 eternally to eternity, O God, thou art. And with thee bring men to dust again, thou  
 4 thou alone, forever, children of Adam, or what you were? In thy sight, a thousand  
 5 years are but as yesterday, thou has come and gone, or so one of the night-watch.  
 6 Swiftly thou hastest our lives away, as a waking dream, or the green grass: thou  
 7 blowest them with the morning, night finds it faded and dead. Still thy anger  
 8 smelt soil of us, thy displeasure drails us out, so hideous thy scrutiny of our  
 9 wrong doing, so clear our hidden sin show in the light of thy presence. Day after  
 10 day waketh, and still thy anger burns: with us a hearth our lives pass away.  
 11 What is our span of days? Seventy years it lasts, eighty years, if happy fate we be;  
 12 for the more part, toil and frustration years that waste in a moment, and we are  
 13 gone. Alas, that to live heed thy vengeance, measure thy anger by the reverence  
 14 we owe thee! Think us to count every passing day, till our hearts find wisdom.  
 15 Behold, Lord, thou it be for ever! Be gracious to thy servants. For us the  
 16 timely mercies, for us abiding happiness and peace, happiness that shall come  
 17 for the time when thou shalt offer us, for the long years of thy favour. Let these  
 18 eyes see thy purpose accomplished, to our own soul reveal thy glory: the favour  
 19 of the Lord our God smile on us! Prosper our designs, Lord, prosper our designs  
 20 yet.

## PSALM 90

- 1 **C**OMFORT it thou be to live with the most High for thy defence, under his  
 2 shadowy shelter abiding still, him the refuge, him thy stronghold thou  
 3 mayor call, thy own God, in whom is all thy trust. He it is will rescue thee from

every treacherous lair, every destroying plague. His wings for refuge, unto thee  
 shall make us safe, his righteousness thy strength and aid. Nothing shall thee harm  
 so far thou shalt escape from the snow that flies by daylight, from perils  
 that walk to and fro in the darkness, from the death that wastes under the moon.  
 Though a thousand fall at thy side, ten thousand at thy right hand, it shall never  
 come near to move thee: unless thy eyes shall look about thee, and see the sword  
 of sinners.

14, the Lord, is thy refuge, thou hast found a stronghold in the most High.  
 There is no harm that can befall thee, no plague that shall come near thy dwelling.  
 He has given charge to his angels concerning thee, to watch over thee whenever  
 thou goest: they will hold thee up with their hands lest thou shouldst chance to  
 trip on a stone. These shall reveal iniquity to thee and scatter, smite thee and sweep it  
 under thy feet.

His wrath is now, unless it is to punish him: he acknowledges my sinners, from now  
 he shall have pity on me: when he calls upon me, I will answer, in affliction I am ill  
 at his side, to bring him safety and honour. Length of days he shall give to comest  
 him, and that is his deliverance.

## PSALM 91

(A psalm. A song. On the Sabbath day.)

SWEEP it is to praise the Lord, to sing, most high God, in houses of thy sanctity.  
 Thou precludest the mazy and forbidden way: daylight and at the fall of night,  
 Here is a charge for the un-protected wary and wild, the waste of wiles and cunning, in  
 delinquencies, Lord, is all thou dost, so shall my heart at the sight of all thou hast  
 made. How magnificent is thy creation, Lord, how unformable are thy powers  
 great! And still, we shall no learn, nor dare to grasp his beauty, the wrong does  
 grow on in his very wickedness. Tell us thy love, make us know how like the grass  
 in spring, yet it be doomed to perish eternally. While thou, Lord, art the ever  
 faithful on high. Thine art thou thy enemies, Lord, vanquished every, and all their  
 way wickedness scattered to the wind!

Through thy power gives me, that gives strength to the righteous, restores me  
 as with the touch of pure oil. Blessed are those eyes with the sight of my enemies' or  
 downfall, those ears with the tidings of leaders' ruin debated. The innocent  
 man will flourish as the palm-tree flourish; he will grow to greatness as the  
 cedar grow to Lebanon. Placed in the temple of the Lord, growing up in the  
 holy courts of our God's house, the innocent will flourish in a green old age, all  
 his enemies and dignities shall be precluded here just in the Lord my refuge, his  
 dealings how clear of wrong.

## PSALM 92

THE Lord reigns as king, seated in majesty, exalted the Lord has his own seat  
 established. He is one that founded the earth, to abide unmovable. Firm stood  
 the universe ere ever the world began; from all eternity, thou art. Lord the rivers  
 echo, Lord thou the rivers raise, swelling down to flood. Magnificent the roar  
 of swelling waters, magnificent the sea's rage, magnificent above these, the Lord  
 reigns in power. How faithful, Lord, are the promises! Holy is thy house, and  
 most surely be holy until the end of time.

## PSALM 93

IN the divine vengeance, Lord, in the divine vengeance stand revealed! Judge  
 of the world, measure thy power, and give the proud their downfall. Most it be the

1 sinners will. Lord, the sinners will then triumph! Shall there be no end to the  
 2 speaking, the rebellious talk, the boastfulness of wrong-doers? See, Lord, how  
 3 they strut down the people, tiller the land of the earth, scatter the widows and  
 4 the orphans, slay the virgin! And they think, 'The Lord will never see it, the God  
 5 of Israel never see it.' They boast, neither, nor shame, their hearts that cover: among  
 6 my people look, how poor before me is his son Sam. Is he dead, the God who  
 7 neglected leaving to me to be killed, the God who gave us eyes to see? His who  
 8 gives nations their schooling, who taught man all that man knows, will he not  
 9 add you to sinners? The Lord looks into man's hearts, and finds these sinners.  
 10 Happy, Lord, is the man, whose does not shame, confide him the leaves of  
 11 the tree! For him, thou wilt lighten the skin of adversity, dipping a pit all the  
 12 while to destroy the sinners. God will not abandon his people, will not desert his  
 13 chosen land; yet long, his justice will appear in judgement, claiming all upright  
 14 hearts for his own. Who takes my part against the oppressor? Who will be to my  
 15 side against the wrong-doer? It is the Lord who helps me; let be then, the great  
 16 would arise be my wrong-doers. Still, when my foot-hold seems lost, the mercy  
 17 of Lord, holds me up, amid all the storming waters that fill my heart, my soul finds  
 18 comfort in thy consolation. What past lets these wicked judges with thee, that  
 19 must triumph in the name of Lord? Let them hurry the fast in their will, pass the  
 20 time of death upon the innocent. The Lord will be my deliverer, in my God I shall  
 21 find a rock-foundation still. He will punish the wrong, destroy them in their wicked-  
 22 ness: therefore the Lord our God will destroy them.

## PSALM 94

1 Come, friends, rejoice in the Lord's favour: cry we out loudly to God,  
 2 'O my strength and deliverer: with praise upon his presence, singing a joyful  
 3 psalm! A high-God is the Lord, a King high above all the gods, beneath his hand  
 4 is the depth of earth, his are the mountains peaking into the ocean, for who but he  
 5 created it? When angry power rebuked the dry land: 'Come in, thou, fill me  
 6 down in worship, bowing the knee before God who made us. Who but the Lord  
 7 is our God? And what are we, but folk of his pasturing, sheep that follow his  
 8 beckoning hand?'  
 9 'Would you but listen to his voice to-day? He has hidden your hearts, as they  
 10 were hardened once at Maroth, or Haze in the wilderness. Your fathers put me  
 11 to the test, challenged me, as if they lacked proof of my power. For forty years  
 12 together, from that generation I ruled away in building: There, I said, are over  
 13 my word learn, then have never learned to obey me. And I took in such in  
 14 anger. They shall never stain my name.

## PSALM 95

1 Give the Lord a new song, in the Lord's favour, let the whole earth make  
 2 'Surely!' Sing to the Lord, and bless his name, never come to be forgot  
 3 of his power to save. Publish his glory among the heathen, his wonderful work  
 4 to all the world to hear. How great is the Lord, how worthy of honour! What  
 5 shall god be to be feared as he? They are but dashed gulls the heathen will  
 6 strive for the Lord, but they made the heavens. Honour and triumph are his enemy;  
 7 worship and magnificence the splendour of his charge.  
 8 'Worshippers of the heathen, make your offering to the Lord, an offering to the Lord  
 9 of glory and homage: an offering of glory to the Lord's name, being majestic,  
 10 come into his courts, worship the Lord in holy array. Before the Lord's presence



let the whole earth bow in reverence; till the heathen, The Lord is king now, he  
has put the world in order, terror to his throne into confusion among; he gives  
the nations a just verdict. Rejoice, heaves, and let earth be glad; let the sea, and  
all the sea creatures, give themselves applause. The fields, and all the herds  
they bear, full of rejoicing; no tree in the forest but will rejoice to greet the  
Lord's coming. He comes to rule the earth; brings the world justice, to every  
one of men by promised word.

## PSALM 96

THE Lord reigns as king; let earth be glad of it, let the hills, the many hills,  
rejoice! For where he sits, clouds and darkness about him, justice and right  
the pillars of his throne; and where he sits, his sceptre; no before him, burn-  
ing up his enemies all around. In the flash of his lightning, how shows the world  
created, how earth trembles at the sight! The hills melt like wax at the presence  
of the Lord his presence, whom all the earth obeys. The very heavens proclaim  
his righteousness; no man has his sight of his glory. Shame upon the men that  
rejoiced in vain images, and make their boast of false gods; how only all the powers  
of heaven, planets, stars.

Glad were the hills, rejoicing for Judah's worship, when thy judgement, Lord,  
are made known; art thou not sovereign Lord of earth, beyond measure exalted  
above all gods? They are the Lord's friends, who were never friends to wrong;  
souls that are true to him to guard ever, rescue them from the power of evil-  
doers. Down of hope for the innocent, down of gladness for honest heart;  
Rejoice and triumph, not vain, in the Lord, of his holy name praise everywhere in  
the heavens.

## PSALM 97

Or psalm.

Shows the Lord a new way, a way of wonder at his doings; how his own right  
stand, his own holy arm, brought him victory. The Lord has given proof of his  
saving power, has vindicated his past doings, for all the nations to see; has  
remembered his promise promise, and kept faith with the house of Israel; no  
turner of the world but has witnessed how our God can save. In God's honour  
let all the earth keep holiday; let all be mirth and rejoicing and loud melody!  
Praise the Lord with the harp, with harp and psaltery's music; with trumpet of  
metal, and the music of the harping horn! Keep holiday in the presence of the  
Lord, our King: the sea with, and all that the sea holds, the world with, and all  
that dwell on it, the dream ending their applause, the hills, too, rejoicing to see  
the Lord come. He comes to judge the earth; brings the world justice, to every  
one of men by due word.

## PSALM 98

THE Lord is king, the nations are amazed; he is throned above the Cherubim,  
and earth trembles before him. Great is the Lord who dwells in Zion, sov-  
erign ruler of all peoples! Let them all praise that great name of thine, a name  
terrible and holy. He reigns in might, thy right hand, in all working victory,  
giving the sign of Jacob down and up. Praise, then, the Lord our God, and  
how shows before his footstool that, too, is holy. Remember Moses and Aaron,  
and all those powers of his, Samuel and those others who called on his name, how  
the Lord listened when they called upon him. His voice came to them from the

the pillars of heaven, so it was they heard the decree, the command he gave them. And  
 they, O Lord our God, didn't listen to them, and they feared that a God of punishing  
 you every breath of theirs then went quick to punish. Praise the Lord our God, and  
 do worship on the holy mountain where he dwells; the Lord our God is holy.

## PSALM 99

(A psalm. For dancing/ing.)

In the whole earth keep holiday in God's houses; say to the Lord the homage  
 that you worshiping, appear in his presence with glad hearts. Learn that it is the  
 Lord, no other, who is God; his we say, he it was that made us; we are his own  
 people, sheep of his care pasturing. Pass through those gates, enter those courts  
 of his, with hymns of praise, give him thanks, and bless his name. Gracious is the  
 Lord, everlasting his mercy; age after age, he is faithful to his promise still.

## PSALM 102

(Of David. A psalm.)

Of misery and of justice my song shall be; a psalm in thy house, Lord, from  
 one that would guide his steps ever more perfectly. Ah, when with those great  
 are thy powers? Here in my house I would live with mistaken heart: no ill pur-  
 pose clouding my view, the temptations of the law my enemies. Mine work will  
 all have at my side; have teaching shall find on plain, journey no obstruction,  
 of whatever nature, death shall be the reward on scornful lips and proud  
 thoughts I will have no enemy. To praise, heart's ink in the land I will look for  
 my company; my servants shall be such as follow the path of innocence. No  
 welcome have for schemers, no standing in my presence for men who talk deceit-  
 ful lies. Mine, as the days pass, to root out them the land every guile soul; till I  
 purge the Lord's way of all evil-doing.

## PSALM 103

(A psalm for the flutes/for men, when he is troubled, and is pouring out his  
 grief to the Lord.)

O Lord, hear my prayer, and let my cry come unto thee. Do not turn thy  
 face away from me, but lend me thy ear in time of affliction; give me relief  
 according whenever I call upon thee. See how the life of mine passes away  
 like smoke, how this frame wastes like a tinder! Devoid of strength, like grass  
 the sun scorches, I leave my food unmet, forgotten: I am spent with sighing.  
 Fill my days sleep in my bones. I am no better than a pelican out in the desert.  
 As oil on some kindled fire, I keep unceasing watch, ready as a single  
 spark on the forest top. Still my enemies taunt me, in their mad rage mine  
 is beyond of me. Ashes are all my food, I drink nothing but what comes to me  
 mingled with my tears. I shake before the weight of anger, as low they cast  
 brought me, who didn't once lift me so high. Like a spring shower my days  
 drizzle, wearing away, like grass in the dust.

Lord, thou hasten for ever, the name, age after age, is not forgetting: surely  
 thou wilt hear myself, and give thee restful it in time, now, to raise pity on  
 at last, the hour has come. See how the seasons pass for ever in vain, how they  
 never has done with their train! Will not the heavenly Jews reverence, Lord,  
 for thy glorious name, all those moments of the earth, when they hear thee

the Lord has told him away that he has revealed himself there in glory, has in given heed to the prayer of the afflicted, neglects their appeal no more. Such is legend beside us for a later age to read to a new people will arise, to praise the Lord, the Lord, who looks down from his sanctuary so high, viewing earth as from heaven, who has listened to the groans of the prisoners, delivered a man is that was doomed to die. There will be talk of the Lord's name in Zion, of his in praise in Jerusalem, when peoples and kings come there to pay him their homage.

Mark, on my journey, he has brought me enough to eat and eat; then my days, is What, my God, with these words are over, my life half done? Age after age thy return echoes: it was thou, Lord, that didst lay the foundations of earth when it first began, it was thy hand that built the heavens. They will perish, but thou it will remain; they will all be like a cloud that grows shaded-brown, and thou wilt lay them aside like a garment, and exchange them for new: thou art unchanging, thy years can never fail. The power of the heavens shall not hold their lands in to power, their men that live on in thy keeping.

## PSALM 101

OF David.

**P**RAISE the Lord, my soul, unto all thy powers, to him that holy name. Mine is the Lord, my soul, remembering all he has done for thee, how he pardons all thy sin, looks all thy iniquities, removes thy sins from utterly good, restores thee with the blessings of his mercy: how he cleanses all thy desire for good, restores thy youth, as the eagle's plumage is renewed. The Lord's acts are acts of justice, every wronged soul he often restores. The Lord, who told Moses his secrets, who showed the sons of Israel his power.

How playing and gracious the Lord is, how perfect, how rich in mercy! He will not always be finding fault, his wrath does not last for ever: he does not speak as we see the doctors, does not want the penalty of our wrong-doing. High as is heaven above the earth, raises his mercy for the man that fears him: for as the east is from the west, he cleans away our guilt from us. For his own worshippers, the Lord has a father's pity: does he not know the stuff of which we are made, can he be forget that we are only dust? Man's life is like the grass, he blooms and dies as the flower in the field; once the hot wind has passed over, it has gone, forgotten by the place where it grew. But the Lord's worshippers know no beginning or end of his mercy: he will help faith with their children's children, as they have is held fast by his servants, and live obedient of his law. The Lord has set up his statutes in heaven, rules with universal sway. Praise the Lord, all you angels of love: all angels of sovereign strength, that carry out his commandment, attentive to the word he utters: praise the Lord, all you hosts of his, the servants that perform his will: praise the Lord, all you creatures of his, in every corner of his dominion and to him, my soul, praise the Lord.

## PSALM 101

Of David himself.

**P**RAISE the Lord, my soul, O Lord my God, what magnificence is thine! Glory and beauty are thy clothing. The light is a garment thou dost wrap about thee, the heavens a curtain thy hand unfold. The waves of heaven are thy chambers, the clouds thy chariot, as the wings of the wind thou dost come and go. There will have thy angels be like the winds, the servants that walk on them like a flock of sheep.

- 1 The earth then has played up its very first tune, satisfied for all time.  
 2 The deeps were stirred up, like a choir, the waters stood high above the mountains,  
 3 then calmed before the softening wind, followed by the voice of thunder, leaving  
 4 the mountains higher to rise, the valleys to sink into their appointed place. And  
 5 to deep waters there have given a boundary they may not pass, never must they flow  
 6 back, and never the earth again. Yet there shall be currents flooding the globe,  
 7 water-courses among the hills: that give drink to every wild beast; from the wild  
 8 streams may drink their fill. The birds of heaven, too, will seek beside them;  
 9 and in every bush will their music.  
 10 From the high dwelling-places there dost send rain upon the hills, thy hand  
 11 is given earth all her plenty. Grass must grow for the cattle. For man, too, the fruit  
 12 of goodly her choice, if he is to bring them out from his house: if there is to be  
 13 wine that will quicken man's heart, oil to make his face shine, and bread that will  
 14 keep man's strength from failing. Moreover there must be for the forest trees, for  
 15 the colleges of Lebanon, wood of the Lord's own planting. Here it is the black build  
 16 in their midst, the dark shadow, the home in the fir branches, their refuge there such  
 17 as the goat find in the high hills, the rock-rabbit in its cave.  
 18 He has given to the moon for our calendar, the sun knows well the hour of his  
 19 setting. Thus does dawn dawn, and the night fall in the night all the three  
 20 is a star with glowing beauty: the young lions go roaring after their prey, the f's  
 21 pantomim, asking for their food. Then the sun rises, and they sink away to lie  
 22 down in their dens, while man goes abroad to pull and drag all the creation.  
 23 What diversity, Lord, in thy creature! What wisdom designed them all! There  
 24 is nothing on earth but given proof of thy creative power.  
 25 There lies the vast ocean, crowding wide on every bank; this, too, is peopled  
 26 with living things past number, great creatures and small, the ships pass there  
 27 on their course. Leviathan himself is among them, him, too, thou hast created to  
 28 roam there at his pleasure. And all look to thee to send them their food at the  
 29 appointed time: it is through thy gift they find it, thy hand opens, and all are  
 30 filled with content. But see, thou dost stir them, and they are dismayed; thou  
 31 takest their life from them, and they breathe no more, go back to the dust they  
 32 came from. Then thou sendest forth thy rain, and there is fresh verdure above  
 33 that replete the face of earth.  
 34 Give ye to the Lord for ever, tell his name with delight in his dominion. One  
 35 glance from him makes earth tremble; he is ready, the mountains are crushed  
 36 to smoke. While life lasts, I will sing in the Lord's glory; my praise shall be his  
 37 as while I have breath to praise him: Oh, may this prayer with him find acceptance,  
 38 in which is all my comfort! Praise all elements from the land, for the wrong-doer  
 39 is forgiven! But thou, my soul, bless the Lord, Amen.

## PSALM 104

- PRAISE the Lord, and call upon his name, tell the story of his doings for all  
 1 of the wonders he has: great like with song and praise, because his acts of miracle.  
 2 Although in that holy name, in every house, that sings for the Lord rejoice. On  
 3 the Lord, on the Lord's goodness still let your hearts dwell, on the Lord's goodness  
 4 be your hearts set. Remember the marvels he has done, his miracles, his acts  
 5 of power of doings: are you not the possessors of Abraham, his own servants, sons of  
 6 the Jacob on whom his choice fell? And he, the Lord, is our own God, while through  
 7 his love runs through all the world. He keeps in everlasting memory that covenant  
 8 of his, that promise which a thousand ages might not forget. He gave Abraham  
 9 a promise, bound himself to Isaac for an heir: by that law Jacob should live, his

Israel, bound to him with an eternal covenant. To them, he said, I will give the land of Canaan, a portion allotted to them and theirs. So few they were in number, as only a handful, living there as strangers! And now they passed on from Canaan to Egypt, the point of living to people; but he suffered none to harm them, to oppress themselves the morning came. Lay no hand on them, never hurt them, to prevent justice and true spokesman of Israel.

And now he brought famine on the land, cutting off all their supply of food. For he had sent no money to prepare the way for them, that very Joseph, who was sold as a slave. Famine told his tale, the pain pulled his neck, but he proved a great prophet at last, the Lord's accomplished word to vindicate him. Then the king came to release him; the proud ruler of many peoples set him free, and appointed him master of his household, lord of all the possessions that were his. Joseph should teach his countrymen to be as Joseph was, should train his spoil countrymen to wisdom. So it was that Israel came into Egypt, that Jacob dwelt as an alien in the country of Canaan.

Time passed, and he gave his people great increase of numbers, till it was as much as to death. And as there he wrought a change of heart, they gave way to his people's presence, devised ruin for his worshippers. And now he sent his servants plagues, and Aaron, the man of his choice, to bring about these signs, at three intervals of his which the country of Canaan would witness. Their sight he sent to terrify them, and still his workings went unheeded. He turned their supply of water into blood, killing all the fish; frogs swarmed out of the ground, to creep in their royal palaces; at his word, flies attacked them, and gave all their in-laid every hall was the ruin he gave them, and it brought fire that burned up in their conspiracy; he shattered their vines and fig-trees, broke down all the wood that grew in their domain. He gave the word, and locusts came, grass-hoppers, too, pest all numbering, eating up all the grass they had, eating up all in the crops their land yielded. Then, his hand fell upon Egypt's first-born, on the first-born of all they had engendered; and as he brought his people out, it enriched with silver and gold, on feet that stumbled among all their cities.

And indeed was Egypt at their going, such fear of him had overtaken it. He spread water about to cover them, that turned to fire in the darkness, lighting their journey. Quails came, when they called for flesh, he satisfied their desire, too, at will bred from heaven, and placed the rods so that water flowed from, raining as manna in the wilderness. So well did he remember that holy promise of his, as made in his servant Abraham: in joy and triumph he led them out, his chosen as people, and gave them the land of the heavens for their own. There, as well as Gentile lands had filled, his chosen/forever should be kept saved, his law should reign. *Amen.*

## PSALM 105

(Amen.)

**P**raise the Lord, the Lord is gracious his merry nature for ever: what tongues can recount all the great deeds of the Lord, can utter all his power? Blessed are they who abide ever by his decrees, may do the right. Remember, O Lord, with loving thoughts towards thy people, come and strengthen us with thy aid, to witness the prosperity of thy chosen servants, to rejoice with thy people that rejoice, to share the glory of thy own domain.

We have taken part in our father's sin; we are guilty men, rebels against thee. So it was with our fathers in Egypt, unremembered, thy wonderful doings, unremembered, thy abundant mercies; even at the Red Sea they must prove rebellious.

- 1 Yet, for his great kindness, to make known his power, he delivered them, shaking  
 the Red Sea, so that it dried up, and leading them through its depths as safely as  
 2 if they trod the desert sands. Thus a great trumpet's peep he roused them,  
 3 chimed them for his song; and the waters overwhelmed their pursuers, till not  
 4 one of them was left. They believed, then, in his promises, sang songs, danced, in  
 5 his tent, but soon they forgot what he had done, and could not wait upon his  
 6 will. They must needs give way to their caprices in the wilderness, challenge  
 7 God's power; there in the desert, till he granted their will, there met a waiting  
 8 violence to plague them. Pharaoh raised his hand in the camp against Moses,  
 9 against Aaron, the Lord's chosen priest; and now earth opened, swallowing up  
 10 Dathan, overthrowing Abiram and his conspiracy. He broke out in their camp  
 11 gore, and the rebels perished by its flames. They made a calf, too, in Horeb,  
 12 making a golden image and worshipping it, as if they would exchange the  
 13 glory that dwelt among them for the semblance of a bullock in grass. So late  
 14 they remembered the God who had delivered them, those powers of his in  
 15 Egypt, strange things seen in the land of Chanaan, terrible things done by the Red  
 16 in Sea! What wonder if he threatened to make an end of them! But Moses, the man  
 17 of his choice, stood in the breach to confront his anger, to ward off destruction.  
 18 And now they perished even on the land of their choice, discouraging his promise.  
 19 The camp was all dissolution. So the Lord, finding they would not listen to his  
 20 voice, lifted his hand and threatened to smite them down, there in the wilderness;  
 21 they should be lost among the peoples, scattered wide through the world. They  
 22 defiled themselves to foreign gods, in honour of the dead gods set on down to  
 23 them; till their wicked ways roused God's anger, and a plague fell upon them.  
 24 His might the destruction came, all Pharaohs rose up and made war, slaying  
 25 himself such title to God's favour as shall be remembered, age after age, eternally.  
 26 They provoked his anger, too, at the waters of Marah, so that Moses was pain-  
 27 ed for their sake; because, in his heart's bitterness, he broke out into open  
 28 complaint.  
 29 Nor thence he cast out the heathen, as the Lord had bidden them: they mingled  
 30 with the heathen instead, and learned their ways; worshipping carved images, to  
 31 their own undoing, sacrificing their sons and daughters in honour of death.  
 32 Inhuman blood, the blood of their own sons and daughters, was poured out in  
 33 worship to the idols of Chanaan; with blood the whole land was polluted, so  
 34 heinous the guilt of its people, so vicious their ways. Then God's anger blazed  
 35 up against his people, his chosen ones became abominable to him, and he handed  
 36 them over to the Gentiles; despised slaves, they were oppressed by their masters,  
 37 bowed down under the yoke. Again and again he brought them deliverance, but  
 38 even then was flesh able to provoke him, there was flesh guilty to drag them in  
 39 the dust. And still, when he saw their distress, when he heard their appeals to  
 40 him, the thought of his covenant recalled them; in his great mercy he would release  
 41 their very captives should be moved to pity.  
 42 Endure us, O Lord our God, and gather us again, scattered as we are among the  
 43 heathen, to praise thy holy name, to triumph in thy power.  
 44 Bowed to the God of Israel from all misery in all misery; let all the people  
 45 cry, Amen, Alleluia.

## PSALM 106

- 1 PRAISE the Lord, the Lord is gracious; his mercy endureth for ever: be this the  
 2 cry of men the Lord has rescued, rescued them from the enemy's hand, and  
 3 gathered them in from sundrying and sunset, from the north country and the  
 4 south.

They have wandered in parched deserts, seeking the way to the city that was their home, hunger and thirst, so that their spirits died within them. As they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and he relieved their distress, guiding them ready to the place where they should find a house. Praise they the Lord in his mercy, in his wonderful dealings with mortal men: good deeds that were many, increased men, poor men that were hungry, enriched men with all good.

Some lay where darkness overwhelmed them, led them to bonds of iron: that is punishment for rebelling against God's decree, for thwarting the will of the most High. Their hearts burned with sorrow, some also to aid their suffering in sleep, they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and he relieved their distress, or rescuing them from darkness, from the shadows, turning their chains to wonder. Praise they the Lord in his mercy, in his wonderful dealings with mortal men: it the Lord who has shattered the gates of brass, even the bonds of iron.

Some for their own fault must needs be humbled: for their guilt they lay or sick, with no means for food, close to death's door. So they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and he relieved their distress, turned the word of his healing, and saved them from their peril. Praise they the Lord in his mercy, in his wonderful dealings with mortal men: that he offer him sacrifice in thanksgiving, and provide profitably what he has done for them.

Some there were that wandered abroad in ships, trafficking over the high seas, to chase are men that have witnessed the Lord's doings, his wonderful doings amid the deep. As his word the storm wind rose, thrashing up its waves: high up in currents broken they were carried, then sank into the trough, with spirits fainting at their peril, one their sailing and suggesting to end life as a drunken dove, all their reasonable forgotten! So they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and he relieved their distress, stilling the storm into a whisper, all at its noise were it quiet. That storm was done, when calm fell about them, and he brought to them to the haven where they longed to be. Praise they the Lord in his mercy, in his wonderful dealings with mortal men: let them read his name, where the people gather, glorify him where the others sit in council.

Now, he change men into desert land, make him dry ground, lead that man to war fearful into a city march, to punish in people's guilt. Then, he turn the wilderness into pools of water, desert ground into springs, and wilderness hungry to full there, so that they had, if themselves a city to dwell in, new fields, and plant of vineyards, and stop the harvest: he bless them, so that their numbers increase beyond measure, and so their cattle grows increase. Once, they were but few, he were them by waves of seed and all increase, but now the same power that drives of proud children, and keeps them wandering in a pathless desert, has rescued for a poor down dead, their households thrives like their own flocks. Heave men will be rejoice to witness it, and malice will stand dumb with confusion. Heed it well, if it there wouldst be wise for those they study, the creation of the Lord.

## PSALM 107

(A song. A psalm of David.)

AT THE hour, my God, a heart rose to the service: I will sing of thee and a praise thee. While, my heart, waking, notices of help and that, there shall I find me thinking. Let us give thanks, Lord, for all the world to hear it, sing a praise while the Gentiles listen, of thy mercy, high above heaven's height, of thy deliverance, that reaches the clouds! O God, mount high above the heavens: all thy glory everywhere the whole earth. There bring aid us the same that saved,

1 give our prayer answer, and lift thy right hand to save. God's word came to us  
 from his sanctuary: In triumph I will divide up Sichem, and parcel out the valley  
 of Tabor; to me Gilead, to me Manasse belongs; Ephraim is my helmet, Judea  
 is the staff I lean. How blest, too, shall be my dwelling, over Sidon I will claim my  
 rights: I will lead the Philistines away in triumph. Such was the word; but now  
 who is to lead me on my march against this fortress, who is to find an entrance for  
 me into Sidon, when thou, O God, hast dismissed us, and we are gone into exile?  
 O God, I will lead the Philistines away in triumph. Such was the word; but now  
 who is to lead me on my march against this fortress, who is to find an entrance for  
 me into Sidon, when thou, O God, hast dismissed us, and we are gone into exile?  
 O God, I will lead the Philistines away in triumph. Such was the word; but now  
 who is to lead me on my march against this fortress, who is to find an entrance for  
 me into Sidon, when thou, O God, hast dismissed us, and we are gone into exile?

## PSALM 108

(To the chief-musician. Of David. A psalm.)

1 **G**OD that pacifiest my renown, do not leave me unbellicosed: there are  
 2 multitudes of lips, treacherous lips, that daily war whispering against me, keep-  
 ing me about with a conspiracy of hatred, in unprovoked attack. On their side,  
 3 all calumny is current for love, to mine all perjury, kindness is repaid with injury,  
 love with ill will.

4 An ill number let him have, and an answer ready at his side: let him leave the  
 5 cause of judgment a desolate man, pinning with thorns in vain. Swiftly let his  
 6 days come to an end, and his effort be entrusted to another: sympathy for the  
 7 no children, withdrawn for the wife! Drive from a ruined home, so sad for her  
 8 his children wander, begging their bread, while eager creditors eye his goods, and  
 9 strangers divide the fruit of his toil. May no friend be left to do him a kindness,  
 10 none to have pity on his defamations him: a speedy end to his race, oblivion for his  
 11 name before generation passed! Still may the sin of his fathers be remembered in  
 12 the Lord's sight, his mother's guilt remain indelible; still may the Lord keep it  
 13 in mind, and wipe out their memory from the earth. Did he himself keep memory  
 14 in mind, when he persecuted the helpless, the footless, the grief-stricken, and  
 15 marked them down for death? Cursing he loved, upon him let the curse fall: he  
 16 blessing he cursed him, may blessing still pass him by. Let cursing sweep him  
 17 about, and like water into his inmost being, wash him till, like the marrow of his  
 18 bones. Let it be the part between, cling to him like a gadfly he can never shake off.

19 So, in their very ruin, may the Lord repay them, my enemies that defame me  
 20 as I really. He it thou, my Lord and Master, take my part, to defend the own  
 21 house; no mercy is so tender as thine. Deliver me: in my helpless state; my  
 22 heart is pierced through with anguish. Like a speering shadow I depart, swept  
 23 away like a leaf on the wing. My knees are weak with fasting, my strength  
 24 gone away unassisted. They make a laughing-stock of me, now their heads in  
 25 derision as they pass by. Help me, O Lord my God: deliver me in thy mercy  
 26 or prove to them that my word are a vibration from thee, sent by an hand too thine.  
 27 Drive me, thou, and let them come as they will, disappoint my adversaries,  
 28 so great thy certain mind. Let them, my accusers, be covered with shame, wrapped  
 29 in the mantle of their own confusions. Loudly will I give the Lord thanks, praise  
 30 him before multitudes that adore: the Lord who has acted on the right hand of the  
 31 throneless, brought redress to the innocent and straggled.



## PSALM 109

(Of David. A psalm.)

**T**o the Master I leave the Lord's promise was given, his love at our right hand  
 while I make thy enemies a foundation under thy feet. The Lord will make thy  
 enemies spring up like a bush out of Sinai; there art no tear-ruts in the midst of  
 thy enemies. From birth, princely men shall be thine, holy and glorious; thou art  
 my son, from life thou hast the day-our race. The Lord has sworn an oath  
 done in no swearing, Thou art a priest for ever in the line of Melchizedek. At  
 thy right hand, the Lord will beat down kings in the day of his vengeance; he  
 will pour vengeance on the nations, heap high the bodies, scatter far and wide the  
 heads of the slain. Let him but drink of the brook by the way-side, he will lift  
 up his head in victory.

## PSALM 110

(Mikaleh.)

**A**ND my heart goes out to the Lord in praise, before the assembly where  
 Angels are gathered. Chase ye the Lord's wondrous doings, delights and  
 unity of all who love him. Where his deeds are high and glorious, faithful by statutes  
 in all eternity. Great deeds, that he keeps still in remembrance! He, the Lord, is  
 a kind and merciful. He abundance he fed the man who feared him, keeping his  
 presence for ever. Lordly the power he showed his people, making the lands of  
 the heathen their possession. He set his throne high and faithful of his decrees  
 there is no relaxing. Perpetual shall these things changeless, right and true  
 be their foundation. So he has brought our race deliverance, in all eternity stands  
 his covenant. Unchangeable is his name and worshipful: vain without his fear is  
 bowing. When reverence are ye who follow in, praise for praise that lord thy love.

## PSALM 111

(Mikaleh.)

**A** MIGHTY man is he, who fears the Lord, bearing great love to his command-  
 ments. Children of his shall win renown in their country, do right, and the  
 Lord shall find a blessing. His shall dwell in his house, and great principality  
 there shall ever stand his throne. Good men are a light dawn in darkness, his  
 light, who is merciful, kind and faithful. It goes well with the man who looks in  
 awe, true and merciful in his dealings. Length of days shall have him still and  
 abiding; there will remember the just for ever. No fear shall he have of evil-doings  
 on the Lord his hope is fixed unchangeably. Perilous his heart remains and rock-  
 fast, quietly he waits for the downfall of his enemies. Rich are his stores to the  
 needy; still his bounty shines in memory. The Lord will lift up his head in tri-  
 umph; surely men are all content to see it. Truly they guard their words in si-  
 lence; worldly hopes must fade and perish.

## PSALM 112

(Mikaleh.)

**P**RAISE the Lord, you that are his servants, praise the name of the Lord  
 together. Blessed be the Lord's name in all times, from this day to all eternity.

1 From the sea's edge to the sea's ending let the Lord's name be praised vociferously.  
 2 The Lord is omnipotent king of all the nations; his glory is high above the heavens.  
 3 What is like the Lord our God, so high above us, that stoops to regard both heaven  
 4 and earth, lifting up the poor from the dust below us, raising the beggar out of his  
 5 dung-hill, 10 And him a prince among the princes, the princes that rule over his  
 6 people? He gives the heaven women a home to dwell in, a mother rejoicing in her  
 7 children.

## PSALM 114

(Aldrich.)

1 **W**hen Israel came out of Egypt, and the men of Jacob feared no more a  
 2 strange language, the Lord took Israel for his sanctuary, Israel for his own  
 3 dominion. The sea fled as the night they witnessed, Jordan flowed the waters  
 4 of Jordan: up leaps, like rams, the startled mountains, up leaps the hills, like pain-  
 5 ing sheep. What ailed you, sea, that you fled in terror; Jordan's waters, what  
 6 drove thee back? Why did you leap up like rams, you mountains, leap up, you  
 7 hills, like quailing sheep? Let earth thrill at its Master's presence: it is he that  
 8 comes, the God of Jacob, who turned the rock into pools of water, the flint-stone  
 9 into a springing well.

9 Not to us, Lord, not to us the glory, for thy name alone be known: only thou art  
 10 merciful, thou art faithful: why must the heathen say, Their God deserves them?  
 11 One God is a God that dwells in heaven; all that his will designs, he creates. The  
 12 heathen have silver idols and golden, gods which the hands of men have fashioned.  
 13 They have mouths, and yet are silent; eyes they have, and yet see nothing; ears  
 14 they have, and yet hear nothing; noses, and yet smell not: and their hands  
 15 are useless, their workings never: a sound their throats may utter. Such be the  
 16 end of all who make them, such the reward of all who trust them. It is the Lord  
 17 that gives hope to the race of Israel, their only help, their only stronghold.

The Lord that gives hope to the race of Aaron, their only help, their only stronghold;  
 18 the Lord that gives hope to all who fear him, their only help, their only strong-  
 19 hold. The Lord keeps us in mind, and guards us blessing, blesses the race of  
 20 Israel, blesses the race of Aaron: all those who fear the Lord, small and great  
 21 alike, he blesses. Still may the Lord grant you increase, you and your children  
 22 after you: the blessing of the Lord be upon you. It is he that made both heaven  
 23 and earth: to the Lord belongs the heaven of heavens, the earth he gives to the  
 24 children of men. From the dead, Lord, thou hast no praise, the men who praise  
 25 us here for place of silence: but we bless the Lord, we, the living, from this day to all  
 26 eternity.

## PSALM 114

(Aldrich.)

1 **M**y heart is aflame, so grievously the Lord torments in my anxiety, the Lord,  
 2 why grieve you mortals when I invoke his name. Death's noose about me,  
 3 caught in the snare of the grave, now I found distress and grief on my side, till  
 4 I called upon the Lord, Succour, Lord, to my perils. Merciful the Lord our God  
 5 is, and true, and full of pity: he cares for simple hearts, and so me, when I lay  
 6 dumbbed, he brought deliverance. Return, my soul, whence thy pains for the  
 7 Lord has dealt heavily with thee: he has saved my life from perils, banished my  
 8 fears, kept my feet from falling. Mine to walk in now, entering the Lord's  
 9 presence, in the land of the living.



proceeds on high, with a screen of thoughts that reaches to the very horns of the earth. Thou art my God, mine to thank thee, thou art my God, mine to praise in thee. Give thanks to the Lord, the Lord is gracious, his mercy endureth for ever.

## PSALM 118

**A**ss. Blessed they, who pass through life's busy world, who follow the  
 1 **Order of the Lord!** Ah, blessed they who dwell in his domain, walk in the  
 2 white gates of their house! Ah, from steep-sloping, the rock paths they tread.  
 3 Above all else it binds us, the charge thou hast given us to keep. Ah, how shall  
 4 my steps be surely guided to keep faith with thy command? Ardent to do thy  
 5 commandments, I go my way undismayed. A true heart's worship thou shalt  
 6 have, thy just words prompting me. All that be from thy love desired, in  
 7 them wilt our hearts not satisfy.

8 **Woe** shall be keep his youth sustained, who is true to thy word. Be thou the  
 9 whole quest of my heart, never let me turn aside from thy commandment.  
 10 **Blessed** they who keep thy words, thy warnings shall keep me clear of sin. Blessed art thou,  
 11 O Lord, teach me to know thy will. My three lips let forth words from within ever  
 12 to be repeated. Gladly as one that has found great possessions, I follow thy sayings.  
 13 Rejoicing in thy will of the charge thou givest, I will mark thy footings. In thy  
 14 command mine joy delight, thy words keep in memory.

15 **Grow** thy heart with life, to live faithful to the command. Clear sight be  
 16 mine, to comprehend the wisdom of thy law. Comfort thou sorely woe, do not  
 17 refuse me the knowledge of thy will. Granted be my spirit, longing ever for thy  
 18 just words. Chastener of the proud, thy care be on all who stray from thy  
 19 command. Guard me at the reproach that shame me, as I was ever attentive to  
 20 thy claim. Guarded together, praise thou mine, thy servant, that thanks  
 21 is only of thy doings. Claims lovingly obedient, do thou that are my consolation.

22 **Keep** like my soul in the dust, we are like to die, as thou hast promised. Delays  
 23 now, to show me thy will, those who have learned when I opened my heart to thee.  
 24 Direct me in the path thou biddest me follow, and all my striving shall be of thy  
 25 wonderful deeds. Despite wrongs come from me, let thy promises make me up  
 26 once more. Deliver me from every false thought, make me free of the covenant.  
 27 **Thy** path my choice, I keep thy bidding ever in remembrance. **Rejoiced** me,  
 28 O Lord, serve, one that holds fast by thy commandments. His feet open thy heart  
 29 wide, and may he see the path thou hast desired.

30 **Rejoiced**, O Lord, thy words bidding to me, faithfully I will keep it. Righteous  
 31 is me, to love thy law closely, and keep ever on it with all my heart. Gladly I long  
 32 to be guided in the way of thy obedience. Woe let my choice be set on thy will,  
 33 as one on precious things. Eyes have I seen the vain phantom; let me find life  
 34 in pursuing thy way. Gladness will be, thy servant, the promise made to thy  
 35 worshippers. Free me of the reproach my heart finds, thou, whose words are  
 36 salvation. Each command of thine I embrace longingly do thou in thy faithfulness  
 37 grant me life.

38 **For** me too, O Lord, thy mercy, for me too the deliverance thou hast promised  
 39 Be answer for those who trust me, that I rely on the truth. Praise thy pro-  
 40 mises, let me not boast in vain in thy covenant like my hope. Not ever and for  
 41 evermore true to thy charge thou shalt stand me. Gladly shall my feet walk, if  
 42 thy will is all my quest. Gladly will I call at thy doings in the presence of  
 43 kings, and be never ashamed. Fain would I have all my comfort in the law I love.  
 44 **Thy** words my sense to greet thy law, ever in my thoughts thy bidding.

The god took on the word thou hast pledged to thy servants; there live all my  
 hope. Good news is my affliction, thy promises have brought me life. Through  
 down by the score of my oppressors, never from thy law I reserve aside. Glorious  
 comfort, Lord, is the memory of the just dealings in times long past. Good such  
 have I to my wrong-doers, and there they stand the law. Good not less a land  
 of exile, of the covenant I make my song. Glorious night finds me still thinking  
 of thy name, Lord, still obedient of thy bidding. Glorious I am to others, but  
 the following of thy will.

Hearings, Lord, I claim no other, but to obey thy word. Hear-ship my ex-  
 plication before thee for the mercies thou hast promised. Have I not planned  
 out my path, turned aside to follow thy desires? Where such as mine can look  
 no delay in working out all thy bidding. Blessed is he who never which shows  
 but for me, never was I forgetful of thy law. Hearings when I sit at death's night  
 to praise thee for thy just dealings. How vast I love the words that bear thee, and  
 are true to thy trust! How thy mercy fills the earth, Lord! Teach me to do thy  
 will.

In fulfilment of the promise, Lord, what kindness thou hast shown the servant  
 before, answer me still, all my hope is in thy covenant. If by I served all thou  
 dost shew me; no more shall thy warnings go unheeded. Indeed, indeed thou  
 art gracious; teach me to do thy bidding. It was my oppressors plot against me;  
 thy will is all my quest. Inhuman hearts, riddled with scorn! For me, thy law is  
 enough. It was in mercy thou dost shew me, schooling me to thy obedience.  
 Is not the law thou hast given clearer to me than rich store of gold and silver?

Judges for the headwinds thou hast made, teach me to understand thy com-  
 mandments. Joy shall be thine, thy true worshippers, to see the multitude I  
 have to thy word. Just are thy words; I know well, Lord, it was in faithfulness  
 thou dost effect me. Judge me no more; ply and comfort thy servant as thou  
 hast promised. Judge me no more; pardon and life for one that loves thy will  
 just to their fall, who wrong me unthinkingly; thy law is all my study. Joined to  
 my company be every soul that worships thee and heeds thy warnings. Jealously  
 let my heart observe thy bidding; let me not hope in vain.

Keeping watch for thy aid, my soul languishes, yet I trust in thy word. Keeping  
 watch for the fulfilment of thy promise, my eyes languish for comfort will-delayed.  
 Kitchen-smoke clouds the wine-skins no more I, yet never forget thy will.  
 Knowers thou art how they are thy servant's dogs! None be my wrongs undone.  
 Knowers will be plotting against me still, that are no friends of thy law. Knowers  
 they are that wrong me, bring aid, as thy covenant stands unchanging. Keep  
 thy bidding I would, though small hope of life they had left me. Mind as thou  
 was wroth, punish me; that wroth thy bidding, and I will obey.

Lord, the word thou hast spoken stands ever unchanged as heaven. Lord to  
 his promise, age after age, is he who made the enduring earth. Long as time lasts,  
 there shall stand, obeying thy desire, Master of all. Let I should sink in my  
 affliction, thou hast given thy covenant to be my comfort. Life-giving are thy  
 commands, never by me forgotten. Lead me thy aid, for thou I see, and thy  
 bidding is all my quest. Let sinners go about to destroy me, I wait on thy will.  
 Look whom I fear, all good things must end; only thy law is wide beyond  
 measure.

My delight, Lord, is in thy bidding; ever my thoughts return to it. Making still  
 on thy commandments, I have given more praise than my enemies. More do  
 wisdom have I than all my teachers, so well have I pondered thy desires. More in-  
 hearing have I than my fathers, I that hold true to the change. Alas! of the so  
 workings, I hide my eyes clear of every evil path. Mark under thy nation, thy

as will I keep ever in view. Most great appearing in the presence many was being  
as an arrow to my taste. Made mine by the law, I show every path of evil-doing.

as No lamp like thy word to guide my feet, to show light on my path. Never will  
as I suspect my oath to give thy just commands obedience. Nothing, Lord, but  
as affliction, never the saving help thou dost promise me? May, Lord, except thou  
as words of mine teach me to do thy bidding. Needs must I carry my life in my  
as hands, yet am I ever mindful of thy law. Ready the names of the wicked caught  
as my feet, yet would I not shrink from thy chastening. Now and ever thy compassion  
as is my joy, is my heart's comfort. Now and ever to do thy will perfectly is my  
as heart's aim.

as O'er upon the men that play truant to the law I love! Other defence, other  
as shield have I among the law I love. Out of my path, lines of wrong; I will  
as not keep thy God's commandments. Only let thy promise aid promise may do  
as wrong disappoint me of the hope I cherish. Only do thou teach me in safety,  
as looking ever to thy will. O'er those who will not, shall none thy chastening life in all  
as their scheming. Chastens they are that perfect the law with wrong for me, thy  
as law is enough. Chastens in my whole being with the fear of thee; I am afraid of  
as thy judgments.

as Protect the justice of my cause; never leave me in the mercy of my oppressor.  
as Pledge thyself will be behind me; never let those the oppressor of my enemies.  
as Pledge myself, I look for thy saving help, the faithful keeping of the promise.  
as Pity thy own servant, and teach him the decree. Perfect in thy law servant's  
as heart the knowledge of thy will. Put off the horns, Lord, no more; no-long the  
as commandment stands doled. Precious beyond gold or jewel I hold the law,  
as Pined in every stress of thing; forever in every path of evil-doing.

as Right wonderful thy decrees are, hard to read, and well my heart needs them.  
as Revelation and light thy words disclose to the simple. When ever a sign from thy  
as lips as I long after thy command. Regard and pity me, as thou hast pity for all that  
as love thy name. Make thou my path as thou hast promised; never be wrong-doing  
as my manner. Rescue me from man's oppression, to walk free in thy law's shining.  
as Return to thy servant the smile of the living Jesus, and teach him to know thy  
as will. Rivers of tears flow from my eyes, to see the law forgotten.

as No law, Lord, thou art, thy words so truly great! Right justice and more truth-  
as fulness inspire all thy decrees. Strong by law's justice, I seek my enemies  
as to do thy bidding. Shall not I, thy servant, love thy position, tested and found  
as to trust? Well disposed and disturbed, I do not forget thy change. Needs thy  
as faithfulness surely, thy law for ever changes. Sorrow and distress have  
as no filling as may in thy commandments is all my comfort. Justice stand in the  
as decree; teach me the wisdom that brings life.

as Thy justice, Lord, my whole heart claims, a heart true to the trust. To thee  
as I cry, O great deliverance; I will do all thy bidding. Twilight comes, and I seek  
as to be glad with thee, keeping ever in thy promise. Through the night my cry  
as no sleep worth, to ponder thy sayings. Thine, Lord, is love in thy mercy, and  
as no great life according to thy will. Tremulous firm down mine, that are answers  
as to thy command. True, Lord, are close at hand; all thy words are true. Taught  
as long since by thy decrees, I have well thou hast ordained them over-arching.

as Unshaken is my law, look down and rescue me, that still am certain of thy  
as law. Uphold my cause, and deliver me; true to thy promise, grant me life. Un-  
as shaken the mercy to the sinner that defines thy bidding. Unshaken, Lord, are  
as thy blessings as thy will is, grant me life. Under all the assaults of my oppressors,  
as I long true to thy change. Unhappy I, that watch thy warnings to the shore  
as to go splendored! Up, Lord, and witness the love I bear thy command; in the mercy

hid not Thy! Unchanging truth is Thy world's fountain-head, eternal the force too  
of Thy just decrees.

Visited by the creature's malice of prisons, my heart still deneth Thy workings, as  
Wise men rejoice not more over rich spoils, than I in Thy goodness. Willing I abide as  
and because Thy love is all my life. Thy grace thanks more than a day I give thee  
for the just rewards thou hast sent. Very great peace is there who love Thy law; as  
thou hast never stumbled. Willingly, Lord, I wait on thine for morning, keeping ever  
true to Thy change. Transfixed by great love, my heart is now obedient to Thy  
will. Gladly I observe precept and bidding of Thine, living always as in Thy  
sight.

Will thou not admit my cry, Lord, to thy goodness, and grant me thy promised  
gift of wisdom? Will thou not compass me thy plan, fulfill the pledge to deliver  
me? What praise shall burst from my lips, when thou hast known thy will? Or  
What tokens of thankfulness this tongue shall utter to the author of all just de-  
crees? Wouldst thou but lift thy hand to aid me, that rule my mind as thy re-  
membrance. Whoso it is, Lord, making for deliverance, but thy love is my reward.  
What will thy just reward grant release, that I may live to praise thee? Why-  
ward thou come, like a lion strong, come to look for thy servant, that is faithful  
still of thy bidding.

## PSALM 119

(A song of ascents.)

**N**OT intended I cry to the Lord in the hour of my distress. Lord, have pity  
I need deliver me from the treacherous lips, the perfumed tongue. Perjured, he  
will give thee all thy desires and more; sharp arrows from a warrior's bow,  
burning faggots of thorns. Unhappy I, that live as idle as a stork, as dead  
among the stars of Cedar! Long banished have among the countries of peace,  
for peace I plead, and their cry is still for battle.

## PSALM 120

(A song of ascents.)

**I** LIFT up my eyes to the hills, as thou deliverance; from the Lord deliverance  
comes to me, the Lord who made heaven and earth. Never will he who guards  
thus allow the foot to stumbling never fall asleep at his post! Such a guardian has  
Israel, one who is never weary, never sleeps; it is the Lord that guards thee, the  
Lord that stands at thy right hand to give thee shelter. The man's eye by day,  
the man's eye night, shall have no peace to keep thee. The Lord will guard thee  
from all evil; the Lord will protect thee in danger; the Lord will prevent thy  
journeying and thy home-coming, henceforth and for ever.

## PSALM 121

(A song of ascents. Of David.)

**W**HITHER would, when I heard them saying, We will go into the Lord's  
house! Within thy gates, Jerusalem, we first stand at last! Jerusalem, built  
as a city should be built that is one fellowship. There the tribes meet, the Lord's  
own tribes, to give praise, as Israel is ever bound, to the Lord's name; there the  
kings are set for judgment, thanks for the house of David. Praise for all that  
belong Jerusalem praise! May all who love thee dwell on ever! Let there be peace

within thy compass, and in thy stronghold! For love of my brethren and my familiar friends, peace is still my prayer for them: remembering the house of the Lord our God, for the happiness I find.

## PSALM 126

(A song of ascents.)

With thee I lift up my eyes, thou that dwellest in the heavens. For thou the eyes of servants art fixed on the heights of thy dwelling, the eyes of a land on the hand of her deliverer! Our eyes, too, are fixed on the Lord our God, waiting for him to show mercy on us. Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy on us, we have had our fill of man's decision. Our hearts can bear no more to be the prey of luxury, the decision of the proud.

## PSALM 127

(A song of ascents. Of David.)

If the Lord had not been on our side, Israel may have said, if the Lord had not been on our side when builders here reared us, it seemed as if they must have wallowed on up above, to have their anger kindled on us. It seemed as if the walls must have reared us down, the towers closed above us, closed above us the waters that ran so high. Pinned by the Lord, who has set us on high a joy to them: a morning marvel! Safe, like a bird secured from the fowler's snare, the snare is a burden and we are safe! Such help is ours, the Lord's help, that made heaven and earth.

## PSALM 128

(A song of ascents.)

Those who trust in the Lord are strong to mount him high, that made us unmoved for ever. The hills praise Jerusalem as the Lord protects his people, now and for ever. Distant of the just! No longer shall justice men bear a rule in it; also the just, too, might tell their hands with guilt. Deal kindly, Lord, with the kindly, with the true-hearted. For, thus come into false paths the Lord will punish, as he punishes wrong-doers, but upon those that are just, peace.

## PSALM 129

(A song of ascents.)

When the Lord gave back him his banished son, we walked like men in a dream; in every month was laughter, joy was in every tongue. Among the banishes themselves I was said, What favour the Lord has shown them! Known indeed the Lord has shown us, and our hearts are rejoiced. Deliver us, Lord, from our bondage, our without hope. Lord, like some downy sweet-cress I spread! The men who are sowing in tears will reap, we dry, with joy. Mournful enough they go, but with need to comfort soon we, they will come back rejoicing, as they carry their sheaves with them.



## PSALM 126

(A song of ascents. Of Solomon.)

**V**AIN is the trader's toil, if the house is not of the Lord's building; vainly the  
 guard keeps watch, if the city has not the Lord for its guardian. Vain, then  
 you should be wile before daylight, and sit on over your tasks late into the night,  
 you whose house is no hardly won; is it not in the hours of sleep that let blossom the  
 corn be born? Perfection itself is the Lord's gift, the fruitful womb is a reward  
 that comes from him. Crowns of thy youth, children are like arrows in a warrior's  
 hand. Happy, whose quiver is well filled with these, their cause will not be set  
 aside when they plead against their enemies at the gate.

## PSALM 127

(A song of ascents.)

**B**LESSING there are, if thou dost fear the Lord, and follow his precept. Thyself  
 shall see what thy hands have sowed to win; blessed thou art, all good shall be  
 thine. Thy wife shall be fruitful as a vine, in the heart of thy house, the children  
 round the table merry as olive-branches. Let a man serve the Lord, work in the  
 morning that awaits him. May the Lord who dwells in Zion bless thy sowing  
 thou art Jerusalem in prosperity all thy life long. Mayest thou live to see thy  
 children's children, and peace resting upon Israel.

## PSALM 128

**S**ILENT have they been, his eyes from thy youth (yet thou his Israel's Israel)  
 Silent have they been, his eyes from thy youth, but never once mistreated  
 me. I bent my back to the oppressor, and long was the furrow ere the plough  
 rested: but the Lord proved faithful, and cut the bonds of tyranny asunder.  
 Let them be dismayed and routed, all those enemies of mine. Let them be like the  
 grass on a hillside, that wither these solacements; never will they be grasped  
 in the reaper's hand, or fill the gleaner's garner, no pasture for the wild, The Lord's  
 blessing on you; we bless you in the name of the Lord.

## PSALM 129

(A song of ascents.)

**O**FT of the depths I cry to thee, O Lord: Master, listen to my voice, let him  
 who can be answer to the voice that calls on thee for pardon. If thou, Lord,  
 wilt keep record of our iniquities, Master, who has strength to bear us? Ah, but  
 with thee there is forgiveness, be thy name ever blessed. I wait for the Lord, for  
 his word of promise my soul waits; patient as ever watchman that looked for the  
 day. Patient as watchman at dawn, for the Lord Israel waits, the Lord with  
 whom there is mercy, with whom is abundant power as ransom. He it is that  
 will ransom Israel from all his iniquities.

## PSALM 139

(A song of ascents. Of David.)

**L**ORD, my heart is not lifted up, my eyes are raised from the earth; my mind  
 2 stays not on high things, no marvels that are beyond my reach. How  
 3 me reminds that I kept my soul ever quiet, ever at peace. The thoughts of a child  
 4 inside mother's breast, a child's thoughts were all my soul knew. Let Israel trust  
 5 in the Lord, hereafter not for ever.

## PSALM 139

(A song of ascents.)

**T**HU David's exhorting. LORD, let not his pious case be forgotten, the work he  
 2 has done to the LORD, the way he made to the great God of Jacob: Never will I come  
 3 beneath the roof of my house, no slink up into the bed that is covered for me;  
 4 never shall mine eyes have sleep, these eyes that stare, until I have found the LORD  
 5 as home, the great God of Jacob a dwelling-place. And now, as Solomon, we have  
 6 found things of what we looked for, we have found it in the place of Jesus: now  
 7 we go into his dwelling, pay reverence at his footstool. Up, LORD, and take posses-  
 8 sion of the meeting-place, there and the ark which is shrine of thy glory! Let  
 9 thy pious go into the vestibule of Jerusalem, thy faithful people cry aloud  
 10 with rejoicing.

**T**HOU of thy servant David, and do not refuse audience to the king they have  
 2 anointed. Never will the LORD be false so that invisible with the voice in David:  
 3 I will raise in thy throne hairs of thy own body: if the same hold fast to my cov-  
 4 nants, to the covenants which I made known to them, their sons too shall reign on  
 5 thy throne for ever. The LORD's choice has fallen upon Sion, this is the dwelling  
 6 for longest day: Here, his voice, is my meeting-place, here is my destined house.  
 7 Trust me, I will. Meet her with abundant store, the price shall have been to their  
 8 father's content: I will clothe her priests in the vestment of triumph, robes of rejoic-  
 9 ing shall adorn among her faithful people. There the rock of David shall trust,  
 10 there shall a lamp burn continually for the king I have anointed. I will crown his  
 11 enemies with confusion: on his brow the crown I gave shall shine unquench'd.

## PSALM 139

(A song of ascents. Of David.)

**G**RACIOUS the sight, and full of comfort, when believers dwell united  
 2 GRACIOUS as light poured on the head till it flows down to the broad, till  
 3 that blessed dove Aaron's breast, and reached the very skirts of his robe. It is as  
 4 if now like the dove of Lebanon were falling on this hill of Sion; here, where the  
 5 Lord gives benediction and life everlastingly.

## PSALM 139

(A song of ascents.)

**C**OME, then, praise the LORD, all you that are the LORD's servants: you that  
 2 stand on the LORD's house at midnight. Lift up your hands towards the heav-  
 3 ens and bless the LORD. May the Lord who dwells in Zion bless thee, the Lord  
 4 who made heaven and earth!

## PSALM 134

(Akkada.)

**P**raise the Lord's name; praise the Lord, you that are his servants, you who  
 1 stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts where our God dwells. Praise ye  
 2 the Lord, a Lord so gracious, praise to his name, a name so well beloved. Has not  
 3 the Lord made choice of Jacob, chosen Israel for his own?

Doubt it never, the Lord is great, he, our Master, is higher than all the gods.  
 4 In heaven and on earth, in the sea and in the deep waters beneath us, the Lord  
 5 accomplishes his will; rumouring clouds from the ends of the earth, rain-sings  
 6 wedding to lightning-darts, bringing winds out of his store-house. He it was  
 7 that smote the first-born of the Egyptians, man and beast alike: what wonder  
 8 and wonders, Egypt, thou shalt wipe, nature plague Pharaoh and all his servants!  
 9 He it was that smote nations after nations, and slew the kings in their pride, Sargon  
 10 king of the Assyrians, and Og the king of Bashan, and all the rulers of Canaan,  
 11 and marked down their lands for a dwelling-place where his own people of Israel  
 12 should dwell.

Lord, thy name abides for ever; age onwards age, and thou art ever adoration.  
 13 The Lord defeats his people, rules play on his servants. What are the idols of the  
 14 heathen but silver and gold, gods which the hands of man have fashioned? They  
 15 have mouths, and yet are silent; eyes they have, and yet see nothing; ears they  
 16 have, and yet are hearing; never a breath have they in their mouths. Such are  
 17 not of all who make them, such the reward of all who trust them. Bless the Lord,  
 18 ye men of Israel, bless the Lord, ye men of Aaron. Bless the Lord, ye men  
 19 of Levi, all you that are the Lord's worshippers. Here, in Zion his dwelling is  
 20 placed, here, in Jerusalem, let the Lord's name be blessed.

## PSALM 135

(Akkada.)

**G**ive thanks to the Lord for his goodness, his mercy is eternal: give thanks to  
 1 the God of gods, his mercy is eternal: give thanks to the Lord of lords, his  
 2 mercy is eternal. Eternal his mercy, who does great deeds as none that can: eternal  
 3 his mercy, whose wisdom made the heavens; eternal his mercy, who joined earth  
 4 upon the floods. Eternal his mercy, who made the great luminaries: made the sun  
 5 to rule by day, his mercy is eternal: made the moon and the stars to rule by night,  
 6 his mercy is eternal.

Eternal his mercy, who smote the Egyptians by smiting their first-born, eternal is  
 7 his mercy, who delivered Israel from their midst, with conquering powers, with it  
 8 his arm ruled on high, his mercy is eternal. Eternal the mercy that divided the  
 9 Red Sea in two, eternal the mercy that led Israel through its waters, eternal the  
 10 mercy that drowned in the Red Sea Pharaoh and Pharaoh's men. And to be led his  
 11 people through the wilderness, his mercy is eternal.

Eternal the mercy that smote great kings, eternal the mercy that slew the kings  
 12 in their pride, Sargon king of the Assyrians, his mercy is eternal, and Og the  
 13 king of Bashan, his mercy is eternal. Eternal the mercy that marked down their  
 14 land to be a dwelling-place; a dwelling-place for his servant Israel, his mercy is  
 15 eternal. Eternal the mercy that remember us in our affliction, eternal the mercy  
 16 that rescues us from our enemies, eternal the mercy that gives all living things  
 17 their food. Give thanks to the God of Israel, his mercy is eternal.

## PSALM 138

1 **Y**HWH set down by the altars of Babylon and kept those, remembering them.  
 2 **YHWH** without-mess gave them, and on them we hung up our harps: when the men  
 3 who sat on pibroch cried out for a song. We must make sport for our enemies:  
 4 a slave, that, from the mado-day sing at them! What, should we sing the Lord's  
 5 a song in a strange land? Jerusalem, if I forget thee, perils the skill of my right  
 6 hand! Let my tongue stick fast to the roof of my mouth if I cease to remember  
 7 thee, if I have not Jerusalem closer than heart's closest! Remember, Lord, how  
 8 the site of Edom triumphed when Jerusalem fell. Overthrow it, they said, 'then  
 9 shall be, till the very foundation is left bare. Babylon, pibroch queen, blessed be  
 10 who sent thy death men so they she remember thou hast death to us: blessed be  
 11 the man who will smite up thy children, and dash them against the rock!'

## PSALM 137

(Of David)

1 **M**y heart's thanks, Lord, for listening to the prayer I uttered, angels for my  
 2 witnessers, I will sing of thy praise. I bow down in worship towards thy  
 3 sanctuary, pointing thy name for thy mercy and faithfulness; thy own  
 4 honour and thy pledged word thou hast vindicated for all the world to see. To  
 5 thee I appealed, and thou didst listen to me, didst fill my heart with courage.  
 6 All the kings of the earth, Lord, will praise thee away from the presence-chamber  
 7 of their kingship! Thine may shall be of the Lord's doings, how good is his name,  
 8 the Lord, who is so high above us, yet looks with favour on the humble, looks on  
 9 the proud men, but from far off. Though afflictions surround my path, thou dost  
 10 preserve me: it is thy power that confounds my enemies' malice, thy right hand  
 11 that rescues me. My purposes the Lord will yet speed; thy mercy, Lord, assures  
 12 for ever, and with thee I dwell as, the architect of thy own hands!

## PSALM 139

(To the choir-master. Of David. A psalm.)

1 **L**ord, I lie open to thy scrutiny: thou knowest me, - inward when I am alone  
 2 - and when I rise up again, cannot read my thoughts from the away. Walk I as  
 3 a sleep I, thou canst tell; no movement of mine but thou art watching it. Before  
 4 even the words are formed on my lips, all my thought is known to thee: requir'd  
 5 and requir'd, thou dost compass me about; thy hand will hold upon me. Such  
 6 wisdom as thine is far beyond my reach, as thought of mine can strain it.  
 7 Where can I go, then, to hide refuge from thy spirit, or hide from thy view?  
 8 If I should climb up to heaven thou art there; if I sink down to the world beneath,  
 9 thou art present still. If I could wing my way seawards, or find a dwelling beyond  
 10 the western sea, still would I find thee beckoning to me, thy right hand upbraid-  
 11 ing me. Or perhaps I would think to bury myself in the ocean, night should sur-  
 12 round me, frontier than thou: but no, darkness is no hiding-place from thee,  
 13 with thee the night shines clear as day itself; light and dark are one.  
 14 Another, then, of my journey being, didst thou not form me in my mother's  
 15 womb? I praise thee for my wonderous fashioning, for all the wonders of thy  
 16 creation. Of thy soul thou hast full knowledge, and this mortal frame had no  
 17 approach for thee, who didst create it: in secret, divine its pattern, thou art the

dark recesses of the earth. All my sins the eyes have seen, all are set down already in thy record; my days were numbered before ever they came to be.

A riddle, O my God, thy dealings with me, so vast their scope! As well count it the sand, as try to fathom them; and, more than shall mine, thy own being still confounds me. O God, wouldst thou but make an end of the wicked! Murderers, to keep your distance from me! Treacherously they rebel against thee, knowingly to set thee at defiance. Lord, do I not hate the men who hate thee, and I not tickle my heart over their rebellion? Surprising hatred I bear them, count them my sinners as enemies. Scourge them, O God, as thou wilt, and crush my heart: put me in the net, and execute my restless thoughts. See if no anguished pain my heart is in, as and shaped! Lead me in the ways of old.

## PSALM 152

(To the shofar-music. A psalm. Of David.)

**P**URGE me, Lord, from human malice, save me from the lovers of oppression, who always plotting weakness in their hearts, always in their scheming, compass sharp as the tongues of serpents, lips that hate the people of abiders. Preserve me, Lord, from the power of craftiness, save me from these lovers of oppression who are plotting to trip my feet. What hidden means they set for me, these snares, what nets they spread to catch me, what traps they lay in my path!

To the Lord I make my appeal, Thou art my God, listen, Lord, to the voice that pleads with thee. My Lord, my Master, my strong deliverer, it is thou that hidest my head in the day of battle. Lord, do not let malice have its way with me, do not prosper its evil designs. They say: their heads high as they climb in iniquity may let their conspiracy prove its own undoing; let burning coals rain down on them, let they cast into a pit whence they shall rise no more. How long is the blasphemer's time on earth; misfortune will overcome the oppressor unawares. Can I doubt that the Lord will avenge the helpless, will grant the poor rebound to those men will yet live to praise thy name; upright hearts to order the work of thy throne.

## PSALM 153

(A psalm. Of David.)

**C**OME quickly, Lord, at my cry for succour; do not let my appeal to thee go unheard. Welcome as incense-smoke let my prayer rise up before thee; when I lift up my hands, be it acceptable as the evening sacrifice. Lord, set a guard on my mouth, post a sentry before my lips: do not turn my heart towards thoughts of evil, and deeds of treachery; never let me take part with the wrong-doers, and share the banquet with them. Rather let some just man deal me heavy blows; this shall be his kindness to me; spare me, and in doubt be taken power over me; such wickedness never will this hand refuse. Their injuries I will not grieve with a prayer . . .

. . . My words have won their hearts, a people that had seen their children haled down the rock-face, a people whose bones lie scattered at the quarry's mouth, like seed when the earth is sown too farrow.

To thee these eyes look, my Lord, my Master; is there I trust let not my life be dark. Preserve me from the attack they have laid for me, from the snare of the wrong-doers. Into their own net, sinners upon sinners, may they fall, and so I pass on in sleep.

## PSALM 141

(A psalm. Of David, when he was in the cave. A psalm.)

1 I come to cry to the Lord, the prayer I utter for the Lord's mercy, as I pour  
 2 out my complaint before him, and him of this affliction I declare. My heart is  
 ready to faint within me, but thou art watching over my path. Thy lie is as thick  
 as the sea, thou art by the whisperer. I look to the right of me, and find none to take my  
 part; all hope of escape is cut off from me, none is concerned for my safety. To  
 thee, Lord, I cry, claiming thee for my only refuge, all that is left me in this world  
 of living men. Listen, then, to my plea; thou hast me all defenceless. Rescue me  
 from persecutors who are too strong for me; rescue liberty to a captive soul.  
 What thanks, then, will I give to thy name, howe'er hours all about me, rejoicing  
 in our thy favour restored!

## PSALM 142

(A psalm. Of David.)

1 I turn, Lord, to my prayer; give me plea a hearing, as thou art ever faithful  
 2 to those, those who love the right. Do not tell thy servant to weeping when  
 I am in there living that was made guiltless in the presence! How long my enemies  
 plot against my life, how they have shamed me in the dust, set me down in dark  
 places, like the long-forgotten dead! My spirit is crushed within me, my heart  
 is oppressed. And my mind goes back to past days I think of all thou dost now,  
 I dwell on the years thou givest of thy power. To thee I spread out my hands  
 in prayer, for thou art real things, like a hand pushed with drought.  
 3 Rescue, Lord, to answer my prayer; my spirit cries to thee. Do not turn the face  
 I cast from me, and leave me like one weak in the slopes. Speedily let me win thy  
 favour, my hope is in thee; so thou I lift up my heart, show me the path I must  
 go follow, so thou I thy life refuge, deliver me, Lord, from my enemies. Then, as my  
 God, thank me to do thy will; let thy gracious spirit lead me, safe ground under  
 my feet. For the honour of thy own name, Lord, grant me life in thy mercy  
 to rescue me from my cruel affliction. Show pity on me, and answer my prayer;  
 thy servant I, make me end of my cruel persecutions.

## PSALM 143

(Of David.)

1 BLESSING to the Lord, my refuge, who makes three hands strong for battle.  
 2 Blessing to the Lord who makes three hands strong for battle, who  
 delivers me and sets me at liberty, who presents me and gives me confidence,  
 3 having done justice to my will. Lord, what is Adam's fate, that thou givest  
 hand to it, what is man, that thou carest for him? Like the wind he goes, like a  
 shadow his days pass.  
 4 And heaven rises, Lord, and come down to earth at thy word, the mountains  
 shall be wrapped in smoke. Break forth thy lightnings, to vanquish my enemies, storm  
 my sinners, and drive them from meditation. With heavenly aid, thou power  
 5 thou deliver me, rescue me from the power of alien foes, who make treacherous  
 promises, and lift their hands in prayer. Then, O my God, I will sing thee a

new song, on a ten-stringed lute I will sound thy praise: the God to whom  
 kings must look for victory, the God who has brought his servant David rescue.  
 Save me from the cruel sword, deliver me from the power of sinners, who make  
 treacherous promises, and lift their hands in perjury.

Let may our sons grow to manhood, till in due season, our daughters shapely  
 as cypresses at the gate of a building, it may be, the temple itself. Our gardens  
 shall well exceed with every kind of plants, our sheep bearing a thousand-fold,  
 shearing the pasture in their tens of thousands, our oxen grazing at the feed,  
 as no ruined cattle, no cattle, no fattening in our stables. Happy men call such  
 a people as this; and is not the people happy, that has the Lord for its God?

## PSALM 144

(Psalms of David.)

Altho' shall I not trust thee, my God, my King, shall I not bless thy name for  
 ever and for evermore? Blessing shall be thine, day after day, for ever and  
 for evermore praised be thy name. Can my praise be worthy of the Lord's  
 majesty, my thoughts set limits to his greatness? Down the ages the story of thy  
 deeds is told, thy power is ever proclaimed, each magnifies thy unapproachable  
 glory, makes known thy wonders. Fearful are the tales they tell of thy power,  
 proclaiming thy magnificence: grateful their memory of all thy goodness, as they  
 boast of thy fair dealings. How gracious the Lord is, how merciful, how patient,  
 how rich in pity! Is he not a loving Lord in his whole creation, does not his mercy  
 reach out to all that he has made?

Joining, then, Lord, in the whole creation's praise, let thy faithful servants  
 bless thee; let them publish the glory of thy kingdom, and discourse of thy power,  
 making that praise known to the sons of men, the glory, the splendour of that  
 kingdom. No age shall dawn but shall see thee reigning with generations past,  
 and thy rule shall endure. O how true the Lord is to all his promises, how high  
 above us in all his dealings! Promises though men may fail, the Lord will lift  
 them up, will revive their crushed spirits.

Quickly, Lord, thy creatures raise their eyes to thee, and thou grantest them, in  
 due time, their supplication, ready to open thy hand, and fill with thy blessing  
 all that live. So faithful the Lord is in all he does, so gracious in all his dealings.  
 The Lord draws near to every man that calls upon him, will he hear-call upon him  
 with a true heart. Open but the eyes, you that fear the Lord, and he will come  
 to us, will hear the cry, and bring aid. Vigilantly the Lord watches over all that love  
 him, marks down the wicked for destruction. While these lips tell of the Lord's  
 praise, let all that live bless his holy name, for ever, and for evermore.

## PSALM 145

(Alphabetic.)

Praise the Lord, my soul: while life lasts, I will praise the Lord of hosts, my  
 God, shall my songs be while I am here to sing them. Do not put your trust in  
 princes, they are but men, they have no power to save. As soon as the breath leaves  
 his body, man goes back to the dust he belongs to; with them, all his designs  
 come to nothing. Happier the man who trusts to the God of Jacob for help, than  
 no-confidence but in the Lord his God, maker of heaven and earth and sea and all  
 they contain: the God who keeps faith for ever, who reforms wrong, and gives  
 food to the hungry. The Lord, who brings release to the prisoner, the Lord,

who gives sight to the blind, the Lord, who comforts the brokenhearted, the Lord, who  
 rebukes the arrogant! The Lord, who protects the stranger, who defends  
 the orphan and widow, who delivers the distressed of the world! The Lord, reigning  
 for ever, my God, Sing, reigning from age to age! Alleluia.

## PSALM 146

(Akkada.)

Praise the Lord, the Lord is gracious, sing to our God, a God who is always  
 true love, praise in his right. The Lord is rebuilding Jerusalem, he calls the  
 banished sons of Israel home: he is it that heals the broken heart, and binds up  
 his wounds. Does he not know the number of the stars, and call each by its name?  
 How great a Lord is ours, how magnificent his strength, how immeasurable his  
 wisdom! The Lord is the defender of the oppressed, and lays the wicked low to  
 the dust. Stir up, then, in thanksgiving to the Lord, with the harp's music  
 praise our God, the God who causes heaven with clouds, and lays up a store of  
 rain for the earth, who clothes the mountainsides with grass, who sows for man's  
 seed, gives food to the cattle, food to the young ravens that cry out to him. His  
 is the well-merited warrior in his choice, not the world's warrior when he is fleeing: the  
 Lord's favour is for those who fear him, and put their trust in his divine mercy.

## PSALM 147

Praise the Lord, Jerusalem, Sing, exult, my God! He is it that builds the gates  
 of Zion, and blesses thy children, who dwell safe in thee: that makes thy lands land  
 of peace, and gives thee full ears of wheat to sustain thee. How low he hurls his  
 command on the earth, how swift his word runs! How he spreads a path of snow,  
 covers earth with an icy veil of rime, makes the frozen rivers of ice, binds  
 the waves at the coast of his dream. Then, at his word, all melts away: a breath  
 from him, and the waters flow! This is the God who makes his word heaven to  
 Jacob, gives David ruling and crown. How rich his dealings with any other  
 nation: nowhere else the revelation of his will. Alleluia.

## PSALM 148

(Akkada.)

Give praise to the Lord in heaven, praise him, all that dwell on high. Praise  
 him, all you angels of his, praise him, all his armies. Praise him, sun and  
 moon, praise him, every star that shines. Praise him, you highest heavens, you  
 waters beyond the heavens. Let all these praise the Lord, it was his command  
 that created them. He has set them their ranging for ever, given them a law  
 which cannot be altered.

Give praise to the Lord on earth, ministers of the sea and all its depths: the  
 wind and hail, snow and rain, and the storm-wind that executes his decree: all you  
 mountains and hills, all you fruit trees and culture: all you wild beasts and birds,  
 all creeping things and birds that fly in air: all you kings and peoples of the world,  
 all you that are princes and judges on earth: young men and maidens, old men and  
 all boys together: let them all give praise to the Lord's name. His name is exalted as  
 no other, his praise reaches beyond heaven and earth: and now he has given death  
 strength to his people. Shall not his faithful servants praise him, the sons of David,  
 the people that draw near to him? Alleluia.



## PSALM 148

(Akkadian)

Praise the Lord a new song here, where the faithful gather, for his praise be  
known. In him, the maker of heaven, let Israel triumph; the king, the ruler of time,  
let Zion's children keep believing: let those be dancing in houses of his name,  
music of tambour and of harp, to praise him. Till the Lord shows favour to his  
people, till he relieve the oppressed, and grant them victory. To triumph let  
the faithful servants rejoice, rejoice and take their rest. Even on their lips they  
tell the high praise of God, even in their hands they carry two-edged swords,  
ready to take vengeance upon the heathen, to smite the nations, to shatter kings,  
and bind princes in fetters of iron. Long does their doom's writing last:  
it is of his true servants that doom is recorded. Akkadian.

## PSALM 150

(Akkadian)

Praise God in his sanctuary, praise him on his sovereign throne. Praise him  
for his noble acts, praise him for his surpassing greatness. Praise him with the  
boom of the trumpet, praise him with harp and organ. Praise him with the tam-  
bour and the dance, praise him with the music of string and of reed. Praise him  
with the clang of the cymbals, the cymbals that clang heavily. All creatures that  
breathe have, praise the Lord. Akkadian.